FEB 8 1949

PERIODICAL ROOM
GENERAL LIBRARY
UNIV. OF MICH.

J

THE NEW
STATESMAN
AND NATION
The Week-end Review

Vol. XXXVII. No. 933. [Incorporating THE ATHENÆUM] SATURDAY, JANUARY 22, 1949 [Registered at the G.P.O. as a newspaper] SIXPENCE

CONTENTS

COMMENTS . . . . Page 69
FORGOTTEN LESSON 71
A DAY IN THE NEGEV. By R. H. S. Crossman, M.P. 72
A LONDON DIARY. By E. Arnot Robertson . 73
THIS ENGLAND 73
BALLAD OF STRANGEWAYS GAOL. By Sagittarius 74
MEN OVER THE WATER. By Aylmer Vallance . 74
THE CHILD LISTENER 75
THIS MATTER OF HEDGES. By Nigel Harvey . 76
OLD VIC NATIONALISED. By Basil Dean . . 77
MEMORANDA MNEMONICA. By Daniel George . 77
THE ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT:
  Round the Galleries. By A. D. B. Sylvester . 78
  Radio Notes. By William Salter . . . 79
  The Movies. By William Whitebait . . 79
CORRESPONDENCE 79
  From Marion Pascoe; A. A. Pallis; Victor Gollancz; Prof. C. D. Darlington; Prof. Hyman Levy; Anthony Greenwood, M.P.; Prof. P. M. Blackett; and Lennox Robinson.
BOOKS IN GENERAL. By Geoffrey Gorer . Page 83
REVIEWS:
  "The Bold Eyes of the Madman." By Walter Allen 84
  A Tragic Hate. By Harold J. Laski . . 84
  Gide's Journal. By Rayner Heppenstall . . 85
  New Novels. By Julia Strachey . . . 85
  Music and Life. By Desmond Shawe-Taylor . 86
  Chaucer's London. By Nevill Coghill . . 87
WEEK-END COMPETITIONS 88

ISRAEL—SATELLITE OR SWISS?

MR. BEVIN has once again proved that, if he does not possess the art of diplomatic success in the Middle East, he at least knows the trick of riding a Parliamentary storm. Undismayed by the gusts of criticism which last week-end buffeted him from every side, he prepared the conjuring trick which he has used so often before. When, in a tense House, Mr. Churchill began to question him on Tuesday, he blandly revealed that once again he had a rabbit in the hat but that he couldn't produce it until next week. Meanwhile, as a sop to the critics behind him, he announced the release of the ten thousand Jews who for months, without any justification, have been kept in the Cyprus detention camps; and the Foreign Office hinted impressively to Fleet Street that *de facto* recognition of Israel might soon be announced.

Only the most simple-minded of Mr. Bevin's critics will assume that his feelings towards Israel have been suddenly modified either by their arguments, or by the Jewish victories. He still resents its existence, regards it as aggressive, imperialistic and Communist, and is determined to contain it. But he has at last realised that, even when supplied with the most expensive British equipment, Arab armies cannot do the job: American assistance must at all costs be obtained. This, no doubt, is the reason for the sudden decision to release the Jews in Cyprus and to propose a British recognition of Israel, if the Americans will simultaneously recognise Transjordan. If the inspired reports in the newspapers are to be believed, the next step will be the proposal of an Anglo-American guarantee of Israel's frontiers, linked with an American loan. This, it is hoped, will be sufficient to persuade Israel to surrender to the defeated Arab invaders some of the spoils of war and to accept a position alongside Transjordan in the Western Bloc.

Such a plan is superficially attractive. But, as so often in the history of Palestine, the Foreign Office has caught up with a good idea just when events have out-dated it. At any time during the last twelve years the Palestine Jews would have joyfully accepted Dominion status as the price of a Jewish State, and granted Britain bases at Haifa, Lydda and in the Negev. But, before 1939, Mr. Neville Chamberlain and, after 1945, Mr. Bevin rejected all such plans as far too pro-Jewish. Now, instead of being granted Dominion status, the Jews have achieved complete independence by armed resistance, first against British forces and then against the Arabs. Mr. Bevin has produced Israeli neutrality just as surely as George III created American isolationism.

This is why any attempt to settle Israel's relations with her neighbours by Anglo-American action, without reference to the Eastern Bloc, is bound to fail. The Israeli political leaders must consider the temper of their public opinion; and they know that nobody in Israel will even consider the idea of becoming a Western satellite. Israel wants to be a Middle-Eastern Switzerland, and any other policy would divide the new-born nation and drive it to the edge of civil war.

How far does America appreciate this? Would Congress be willing to authorise a loan to a country which rejects the Truman Doctrine as "military entanglement." Mr. Truman himself is sincerely determined to secure Israel real independence; and this must obviously involve freedom to choose neutrality. But the State Department probably shares Mr. Bevin's view that a neutral Israel would constitute a strategic vacuum of the utmost danger to Anglo-American plans for the use of the Middle East in the event of war.

We fear that the new British plan, concocted so rapidly at the beginning of this week, completely disregards this new factor of Israeli neutrality or, rather, hopes to over-ride it by combined Anglo-American pressure. If this indeed is Mr. Bevin's design, he should recall that all his previous efforts to implicate America in policies designed to contain Israel, though eagerly accepted by State Department officials, have in the last resort been frustrated by the White House. The new plan would fare no better. That is why *de facto* recognition should be given without reservations or conditions.

As for the long-term solution, Britain should take the lead in proposing an East-West guarantee of the neutral status of both Israel and Transjordan. Today, the search for neutrality in the conflict between the Great Powers is the one aim which binds Jews and Arabs together. Both sides detest the idea of being used as strategic pawns and resent being committed to operate as minor auxiliaries in either American or Russian military plans. A neutral Palestine, divided into a Jewish and an Arab State, and guaranteed by America, Russia and Britain against aggression, could become the focus for a New Deal in Middle-Eastern politics and economics, while demonstrating that on one problem at least agreement between the Eastern and the Western Blocs can be achieved.

World Labour Disunity

Regrettably, but perhaps inevitably, the World Federation of Trade Unions, established in 1945 with the aim of co-ordinating policy for its 70 million affiliated members, has become a victim of the cold war. It had long since become obvious that no compromise could be reached between Communist and non-Communist conceptions of the W.F.T.U.'s functions; and both the Trades Union Congress and the Congress of Industrial Organisations must have been well aware that there was no chance of the W.F.T.U. Executive, on which the anti-Communists were in a minority, accepting Mr. Deakin's resolution that the W.F.T.U. should suspend its activities completely for at least a year, while leaving the door open for its revival on a modified basis, should conditions change. Rejecting the proposal of Mr. Kuznetsov, the Soviet member, that the W.F.T.U. should carry on "with defined and limited functions," Mr. Deakin and Mr. Carey, of the C.I.O., have walked out, carrying with them the Dutch member of the Executive, Mr. Kupers. Mr. Carey, who has been leading the anti-Communist (and Catholic) forces in the C.I.O., has expressed the hope that the W.F.T.U. "corpse" can now be buried. It is not, however, as simple as that. The Russians and their friends will undoubtedly keep what is left of the W.F.T.U. alive and active under Communist control; they can still count on the adherence of the main French and Italian unions, and from the Soviet angle the W.F.T.U. is doubtless regarded as a useful focus for labour discontent in colonial countries. Secession leaves the British and the Americans with several awkward problems to face. Mr. Carey has declared that, as an instrument for the defence of workers' rights, an organisation is required which will be "independent of government, political parties and ideologies"—a conception of international trade unionism difficult to square with political realities. It may be a simple enough matter to convert the existing Trade Union Committee representing the Marshall Aid countries into a rival "independent" International; but will it count for much in Europe while the big sections of French and Italian unions are outside it? It will be difficult, too, for such a body to win the support of the nascent trade unions in the colonial areas, where the Communists will readily identify it with Anglo-American imperialism. A further complication arises out of the insistence of the American Federation of Labour, which held aloof from the W.F.T.U. from the outset, that any new International must open its ranks to refugee trade unionists from Eastern European countries. Such refugees cannot stand for any real working-class movement; and recognition of them would put immense difficulties in the way of eventual reconciliation between trade unions, East and West.

The Durban Riots

The terrible riots in Durban last week should be a warning to the Nationalist Government of South Africa that racial politics are inflammable stuff. Dr. Malan may use this disaster to point the moral that the Africans are a danger to social peace and that his party is right to impose further drastic restrictions upon them. But, in fact, such explosions are ultimately caused by precisely the discrimination and exploitation which are the aims of the Nationalist party. The Africans are the poor and backward majority in South Africa: they suffer most from the supremacy of the White minority. But the Indians, who also find themselves in a hostile environment, are a smaller and more vulnerable target for African anger, stimulated by the profiteering to which Indian traders are forced by rack-renting and other economic pressures exerted by the White landlords. The Nationalists stand to gain from every division among the majority they rule, whether it is the split between the Boers and the English, the tension between White and Coloured, or friction between the Indians and the Africans. No one can say whether *agents-provocateurs* were at work in Durban last Thursday. But, whoever applied the match, the train was laid by the violent and shameful social tensions which the Malan Government is continuing to stimulate by its policies. If the rising discontent of the Africans can be turned against another minority—a standard technique in cases of national oppression—the chances of united Coloured action against the Whites are diminished. The Africans, we trust, will realise that it is only the Fascist elements in the Union who would profit by a repetition of last week's unhappy events.

Nordic Neutrality

The blunt declaration from the U.S. State Department that deliveries of American arms must be confined to full members of the projected North Atlantic Pact has confronted the three Scandinavian countries with an issue which they have been laboriously endeavouring to avoid. Mr. Unden, the Swedish Foreign Minister, told the Parliament in Stockholm on Tuesday that his Government was ready to modify Sweden's traditional policy of complete neutrality to the extent of subscribing to a Nordic Defence Union committing Sweden to underwriting the security of both Norway and—potentially a more onerous liability—Denmark. It is evident, however, that Sweden is still deeply reluctant to join in an Atlantic Pact involving commitments which would compromise irrevocably Sweden's neutrality and which might result, it is feared in Stockholm, in a serious deterioration of relations between the Scandinavian group and the U.S.S.R. Norway, it would appear, is more inclined to cast in her lot with the West. There are grave doubts entertained in Oslo whether any neutrality would be respected in the event of a third world war, and it is recognised that the relatively small Swedish armaments industry is inadequate for the provision of material to a Nordic Defence Union. Most vulnerable of the three Scandinavian countries, Denmark had hoped, somewhat optimistically, that assistance in the form of military material might be obtained from the United States if the Scandinavian group concluded, within the framework of the Uno Charter, a defence pact involving no military commitments outside their own frontiers. This hope is now dashed; and the forthcoming conference of the Scandinavian Foreign Ministers seems likely to end in a parting of the ways.

Trade with Poland

The Anglo-Polish Trade Agreement, signed in Warsaw last Friday, is a comprehensive pact providing for substantial development of mutual commerce and for the settlement of compensation claims arising out of the nationalisation of British property in Poland. The projected total of £130 m. trade each way is spread over five years; the contribution it represents to British food and timber supplies from non-dollar sources is therefore relatively modest, though the prospect of even a limited increase in Polish eggs and bacon for the breakfast-table will be heartily welcomed by British consumers. The great merit of the agreement is that it is evidence of mutual determination not to allow the cold war to stand in the way of beneficial commercial exchanges, and to plan trade for a considerable period ahead. The compensation part of the agreement is still subject to negotiation on details; but these should not present great difficulty, as the broad principles have now been settled. With the pact as a basis, it should be possible to arrange for considerably bigger exchanges than are expressly provided for in the agreement. The Poles are now in a position to adapt part of their long-term agricultural programme to the requirement of the British market. On the British side, having regard to the importance of developing non-dollar sources of supply, every effort will have to be made to ensure regular deliveries of the raw materials and capital goods which Poland needs, even if we have to turn a deaf ear to American objections to the building up of economic strength on the "wrong side" of the Iron Curtain.

U.S. Labour Demands

The Automobile Workers, the strongest affiliate of the Congress of Industrial Organisations, with a membership of more than a million, have set the pace for the American labour movement with a 1949 programme of demands that gives chief place, not to wage advances, but to the development of social security. The U.A.W. is asking the employers to meet the cost of a social benefit scheme, including retirement pensions as well as other benefits, and is also demanding the restoration of wages to the level, in terms of purchasing power, at which they stood in June, 1946, when Congress swept away the war-time regulation of prices. These claims, which will be presented first to the big automobile corporations, are likely to be taken up by other C.I.O. unions; they follow the line of advance already successfully pioneered by the United Mine-Workers. Failing an adequate overall State system of social security, such as exists in this country, the obvious course for American labour is to press for the provision of equivalent benefits by employers under the terms of wage contracts. Strengthened by their demonstration of power in the Presidential elections, the American unions are now in a position to insist that if, in the name of private enterprise, the Administration is to be held back by Congress from developing an adequate social security service, the workers must get what they want by pressing the big corporations to disgorge some of their inflated profits in social services. The weakness underlying such a policy is that, unlike State provision of social benefits, it fails to protect those sections of the population which have no massive trade union organisation to sponsor their needs.

White Supremacy in Georgia

Before Congress has had a chance to consider Mr. Truman's request for legislation protecting the rights of Negroes and other minorities, the defendants of White Supremacy have taken the offensive. Herman Talmadge, the Governor of Georgia, has asked his State legislature to re-impose the poll-tax, to introduce a stricter test of literacy and to require voters to register every two years. These barriers to a free vote had been broken down three years ago when a liberal, Ellis Arnall, was Governor. Now all Georgia's voters—including some 150,000 Negroes—are to be disqualified, and a new register will be compiled to exclude voters that the Talmadge machine considers "unsuitable." Herman Talmadge knows the tricks of this trade. His father, Gene—who rivalled Senator Bilbo as an anti-Negro demagogue—used them all in his long domination of Georgia politics. The "unit system" of election, which gives the smallest hill county the same vote in selecting a Governor as the city of Atlanta, is a superb piece of constitutional chicanery designed to ensure the control of the Talmadge dynasty, which relies on the rural vote. It put young Talmadge in the State Capitol after his attempt to succeed his father by main force was defeated by Ellis Arnall two years ago. Clearly, Talmadge is following General Grant's Civil War dictum "to fight it out on this line if it takes all summer." He and the Dixiecrat forces will attack Federal intervention in the State legislatures, in Congress and the Courts. How Congress can frame civil rights legislation that is adequate, workable and constitutional is a serious problem. But, as if to give added proof that action is needed, two jurors in a Georgia lynching trial have just been permitted to appear as character witnesses for the defendants, who of course were acquitted.

The Steel Federation's Plaint

The Iron and Steel Federation has launched yet another attack on the Steel Bill, arguing that uncertainty about the industry's future makes it impossible to raise the capital—or at any rate the equity capital—needed to carry through development programmes already approved; thus the expansion of capacity and the replacement of obsolete plant will be delayed. The Federation also argues that doubts as to the precise limit of what is to be taken over make it difficult for firms to plan their capital expenditure, and that directors dare not take any risks in face of the power conferred by the Bill on the Minister to disclaim expenditure which he regards as contrary to the public interest. There is, of course, in all this, a considerable measure of truth. Until the question whether the industry is to be nationalised in the near future is finally resolved by the result of the next general election, neither the Government nor the steel firms can quite know where they stand. The delay in settling the issue is unfortunate, but does not lessen the need for nationalisation. Even if the steel firms were assured that they were not to be taken over, there would be no prospect of their raising, without State assistance, the large capital sums needed for expansion and modernisation. They might raise all they would be in a position to spend this year; that would be only a fraction of the sum needed for the complete execution of the essential reconstruction plan. All that the Federation's argument proves is that opposition within the management of the industry to public ownership is bound in some degree to delay the putting of the industry on a satisfactory technical basis.

PARLIAMENT: Bowled, but Not Out

Wednesday

DURING question-time on Tuesday, the "usual channels" were in unusual commotion. In and out of the Lobby and around the Speaker's Chair, the Whips, the Leader of the House, the Foreign Secretary and the Leader of the Liberal Party kept up a running conference on the form of the Palestine discussion, while in the Chamber, Members overheard with half an ear the unrelenting questions to the President of the Board of Trade.

When the Foreign Secretary, smiling and comfortable, took his place, even his own supporters could scarce forbear to cheer. What, thought some, does policy matter? It's character that counts. And others still detected an antique nobility in a man who goes on batting when he's bowled. But most Members, crowded on the benches as for a Crisis, were silent, waiting for the advertised row to begin.

"Mr. Churchill," said Mr. Speaker. Churchill rose carefully, and asked for a statement of policy upon recent events in the Middle East concerning Palestine. The Foreign Secretary read his reply confidently. "Delicate negotiations" were going on; "good progress" was being made; discussion had better be postponed. With each *cliché*, the House groaned in cadence. What is the purpose of debate—to make decisions or merely to rubber-stamp them? There is danger in the assumption by the Executive that because Parliamentary debate may embarrass its policy, debate should only take place when policy is irreversible.

As though to establish that the Executive can do what Parliament has scarcely been able to discuss, the Foreign Secretary, in a parenthesis unrelated to Churchill's question, announced that the Cyprus Jews would be freed. A mood of bewilderment settled on the House. If discussion might impair the delicate situation in Palestine, would not what Churchill called "the reinforcement of Israel" by the Foreign Secretary be even more disturbing?

The back-benchers who had wanted to take part in the discussion, and whose views on the matter were precise, were as confused by the Foreign Secretary's inconsequential answers as they were by his improvised decisions. Will there be a debate on Palestine next week? asked Churchill. Bevin answered with these *non sequiturs*: "There is a question which should be answered with regard to the release of the men in Cyprus . . . In nearly all this business I have been handicapped by arrangements with other people" . . . and, welling up from a brimful subconscious, "I have no desire to preserve my reputation."

No wonder, then, that from neither side of the House was there any specific challenge to the Foreign Secretary on any issue. At that point, Clement Davies repeated the request for an early Debate; to which Morrison, as Leader of the House, crisply agreed.

The House relaxed. The back-benchers who had been previously preparing their supplementaries, consoled themselves with the hope that they might put their arguments next week. Then Churchill had an afterthought. Since the Government's Middle East policy had been marked by hesitancy and half-measures, would the Foreign Secretary assure the House that the troops at Akaba would be resolutely and fully safeguarded? The Foreign Secretary gave that assurance firmly.

After that, the questions dribbled to an end. Only once, when Gallacher asked about Transjordan, did the Foreign Secretary abandon his easy demeanour. He would not lightly allow Transjordan's good manners, chivalry, diplomacy, honour and virtue to be challenged; they corresponded, more or less, with his own.

For those who had expected blood, the Foreign Secretary's clinch with his critics was a disappointment. Gallacher's "Pals again!" when the Tories applauded a sneer against himself, was a sad recognition that the Opposition was not going to beat up Bevin after all. But the Foreign Secretary's last words, "Unless I am provoked, I will not say any more," left Members, as they moved into the Lobbies, with the conviction that the anti-climax must be followed by a climax.

MAURICE EDELMAN

FORGOTTEN LESSON

LATE in 1920, in the aftermath of that other war, the master of the British Embassy in Berlin—Lord d'Abernon, distinguished, bearded, energetic—was deeply troubled about the growth of Communism. "The French," wrote Lord d'Abernon in his private diary for November 20th of that year, "do not appear to understand that the military danger is past and that the real danger in Germany is Communist disorder." Silly French! They wanted the British to agree to the disbandment of Right-wing militarist formations such as the *Orgesch* and the *Einwohnerwehr*, a demand which the British Ambassador thought "almost insane—like cutting the branch of the tree on which you are sitting."

Lord d'Abernon and the Foreign Office were sitting on the wrong branch, of course, though they have never cared to admit it. And in fact it was only later that we heard of Ebert's fateful telephone conversation with the German General Staff (General Groener was speaking for Hindenburg) on that fateful evening of November, 1918, when the security of the new Republic, which the Social democrats were supposed to guard, passed secretly into the hands of the Officers' Corps. It was only later that we saw for certain that the Right, and not the Left, had captured Republican Germany; only later that we learnt of the subventions which Kirdorf, Thyssen and Stinnes were giving to the Nazis. These facts, which were to be brought home to us by bitter and nearly disastrous experience, should have conveyed a moral: we had strained at a myth and swallowed a monster. As a German writer was to remark in 1948 (in the liberal *Frankfurter Heute*), "there is, unhappily, a close inner connection between anti-Bolshevism and Fascism."

Was the lesson learnt? Not everywhere, it seems. "The pressing danger today," Lord Douglas, lately British Commander-in-Chief in Germany, was writing in 1948, "is not so much a revival of German militarism as the Westwards spread of Communism." At about the same time—amid a chorus of praise for the "heroic resistance" of the people of Berlin—the United States Governor of Bavaria, Mr. Murray van Wagoner, declared that Western Germany had become the front line in the cold war against Communism. Lesser spokesmen on both sides of the Atlantic have been saying the same thing in still brighter tones.

Lord Douglas (like Lord d'Abernon before him) was speaking for the official view, which appears willing to support any German who is staunchly "anti-Communist." The widespread alarm which has greeted recent manifestations of nationalist resurgence in Western Germany suggests that British public opinion—to say nothing of the profound uneasiness of France—has not so easily forgotten the lessons of the last thirty years. Even General Clay has found it necessary to point to the evidence for this revival of nationalism, in which anti-Semitism is an ugly ingredient; and the extracts published lately from Otto Strasser's delirious propaganda have attracted much attention.

Is Right-wing nationalism becoming once again the dominant force in Germany, or at least in Western Germany? When Otto Strasser, prominent figure in the early days of National Socialism, wrote lately that a third world war would be desirable for the Germans, since this would enable them to hold the balance and emerge on top, he was expressing a view which we may believe is confined to himself and some other fanatics. Perhaps the views of a nationalist as die-hard as Strasser may be comforting to the quarter of a million ex-officers in the Western Zones, to the unrepentant Nazis (whose name is legion) and their like; we need not suppose that they have any meaning for the mass of Germans. It is not in this direction, crudely idiotic, that danger lies. As after 1918, the potential threat from German nationalism does not rest with the hotheads who rush at once into the fray (Strasser and his friends in 1949, like Kapp, Ludendorff, and the early Hitler in 1923), for these have misjudged their moment and are ahead of their time. It rests with other and more enduring interests who still remain, for the most part, behind the scenes.

There are two causes for alarm. First of all, there is a great deal to suggest that nationalist groups—it would probably be wrong to call them Nazis, since Nazi ideology is generally eclipsed, at least for the moment—have successfully organised themselves in a series of supper-clubs, private societies, discussion-circles, and the like, with a view to political conspiracy. Their presence is revealed now and then in the growing self-confidence of German politicians who, like Adenauer and Reuter, expect the Western Allies to treat them as privileged members of the anti-Bolshevist team—leaving their "or else . . ." unsaid but strongly implied.

Exploiting the East-West clash, these people grow strong upon the knowledge that the British and Americans are deeply committed to the establishment of a West German State—and that it is now in the power of the new German nationalists (grouped in the parliaments of the Western Zones and in the constituent assembly at Bonn) to make the British and Americans pay highly for partition. There is the feeling that the British and Americans need German man-power to fight the Russians, so that, very shortly, the formation of a German army (perhaps camouflaged at first as a police force) will be granted. Highlighting these ideas and trends of thought, there are the magnesium flares of neo-Nazism lit by Strasser and his like.

Secondly, but fundamental to this new nationalism, there is the solid and inescapable fact that the Western Allies have failed to change the pattern and structure of German social and economic life. The ladders up which the old nationalists of the Pan-German League and the Navy League climbed to power under the Kaiser—and the Nazis a generation after them—are still in place. It might not matter so very much that German nationalists should clutter up the parliaments and civil services of Western Germany, should write freely in the press, should carry on an active life designed to restore their wilted prestige—provided that these ladders of material wealth and political privilege were being knocked from under them. Nothing of the kind is taking place: the foundations, the framework, the stairways and ladders of German nationalism are, in spite of certain appearances to the contrary, about as secure and sound as they were in the 'Twenties. Underlying the ruin and confusion produced by defeat—an aspect on which humanitarian sentiment has understandably concentrated—the social forces which have repeatedly proved unamenable to democratic control have been steadily regaining ground.

This is the central point: that the Western Allies have carried through no social changes of any importance—either because they have not wanted to or because they have allowed themselves to believe that democracy would grow out of Fascism by a process of pure and tender persuasion. This has meant that denazification could not be carried through on political lines—by eliminating, that is, the social conditions as well as the individuals responsible for Nazism—but had to be carried through (since the Allies were committed to it) on legalistic lines. Unending queues of Nazis or suspected Nazis have been "examined" (usually by their friends); inevitably, the real culprits have mostly escaped. Mr. Flick, a principal owner of the *Vereinigte Stahlwerke* (the biggest Ruhr steel trust), was sent to prison for seven years for plundering foreign countries and employing slaves; one of his closest associates since 1930, Mr. Dinkelbach, was declared by a denazification tribunal to have "~~no~~ mental relations with Nazism," and was appointed German trustee of the Ruhr iron and steel industry by

British military government. What was the difference between Flick and Dinkelbach? The Germans, at least, have never been able to find out.

An effort has been made to allay French fears by the establishment of a Military Security Board whose task is to demarcate—in a field where clear-cut distinctions are impossible to make—the line between "peaceful development" and war potential. The Board, however, will be no more than an agent of Western policy. The essential fact is that the Western Allies see no wrong in supporting fully all those men who stood high in "private enterprise" after the first world war—Zangen, Roelen, Thyssen, Abs, Buecher, and many others—and who, as the documents attest, gave Hitler the money and the political support that he needed to achieve power. Some of these men have denounced Hitler; one or two had even turned against him. Does this in any way alter the fact that they and the material conditions of monopoly ownership were among the root causes of Nazism? Fritz Thyssen, true enough, left Germany the day after Hitler went into Poland; his property was confiscated by the Nazis. But official investigations have since shown conclusively that Thyssen did not leave because he hated Nazism, but because he was afraid that further invasions would uncover his undeclared (and therefore untaxed) assets in Holland, Switzerland, and the Argentine. Supposing even that he had really suffered a change of heart, it would still have remained true that he had "in the early days of the Weimar Republic"—his own words in *I Paid Hitler*—"supported various semi-military patriotic formations, among them the National Socialist party." Was this the sort of man to take to our bosoms after this second war? Presumably not. Yet Fritz Thyssen, far from being penalised, has every chance of getting his property (and with it his political power) back again. Only last month the American authorities exerted themselves to gain the necessary permits for Thyssen to go to Brussels for talks about steel; and Mr. Hoffman, it is now reported, has accepted the view of his investigating committee of American businessmen, that German steel output should be boosted, by suspending dismantling, to nearly 14 million tons a year.

The list of Nazis and extreme nationalists in the high posts of industry, administration, politics, law, and education is shockingly long. So flagrant is their presence in the Western Zones that no one bothers any longer to deny it. The real danger of German nationalism lies here—not in the ravings of the Strassers—here where the high hopes of changing Germany and the Germans are brought to nothing; where the plans and efforts made for "re-education" are rendered null and void; where the average German—muddled, anxious, eager above all to justify himself—finds the Western Allies on the same side, and saying the same things, as the leaders of German nationalism; and where the plea of anti-Bolshevism is once more made to serve as mask and covering upon the face of men who have twice killed the peace of Europe and the world.

A DAY IN THE NEGEV

A FEW miles behind the front line, we swung left off the Gaza Road through what was once a British military camp. On May 15th it had been handed over intact to the Arab authorities; but by now hundreds of eager pilferers had demolished it as thoroughly as Arabs in the past demolished Roman cities and Crusader castles. Only a few chimney stacks had survived. Above the camp, the shell-holed road ran just below the northern brow of the barren foothills which divide the Palestine plain from the rolling expanse of the Negev. To our left, we could see the camp-fires of the Egyptian brigade beleaguered at Faluja. Suddenly we rounded a corner past a brand new little cemetery—and there was Negba.

Negba, a year ago, was a model collective settlement, with its flowering shrubs and lily ponds inside and, surrounding it, spacious fields and gardens and vineyards cut out of the scrubby hillside where for centuries nothing had grown. But, like most settlements, it also had its strategic importance and was rightly called "the gateway to the Negev." That is why no doubt the Palestine Administration a few years ago leased some of the settlement's land and built a police fortress three-quarters of a mile away by the side of the Beersheba road, the main line of communication to the Jewish settlements in the Negev proper. Relations between the settlers and their British tenants were very amicable. Captain S. from the police station, indeed, used to come to dinner pretty regularly until, on May 14th, he handed the station over to the Egyptian army and went back to Britain.

Next day, the siege of Negba began with twenty-five pounders firing over open sights down from the police station. The settlers had just under one rifle per man or woman, a Bren gun and later on a Piat gun with three anti-tank shells. They had expected to deal with Palestinian Arab trouble but not with a full-scale Egyptian invasion. Few of them knew anything of war. But fortunately Major F. was there, and he did.

It was Major F. who had driven me down that morning, a big blond ex-Rugby footballer from the Grenadier Guards, who in 1945 fell in love with Negba (and incidentally with a Negba girl) and decided, if the settlement would accept a Gentile, to make his home there. On May 15th Major F. put the settlers to digging, buttressing, wiring and mine-laying. When the tank attack came, after seventy-two hours' continuous shelling, his defences were just strong enough. With the loss of two tanks the Egyptians withdrew to the police station.

Later on, Negba suffered a second siege—indeed thirty thousand shells were fired into it—but by then it was much better defended and there were Palmach troops to stiffen the defence. When I saw it on a hot winter morning, with the bees busy in the flowering-shrubs, the settlers were already busy re-roofing before the winter rain. Major F. took me to the ruins of his cottage and was just explaining to me with pride that the black dots in the minefield outside were 68 corpses too dangerous to move, when we heard a soft cooing just over our head. There sat four doves on the ruined chimney stack. "Good God, they are back before I have got the dovecot ready" said the Major. "By the way, when you drive on up to the police station, see what is left of our Gippo, Major Ahmed Ali. Last time I passed, the jackals had still left part of his thigh. Now, do come and see my lily roots which have survived in the pond."

The story—and the mood—of Negba is typical of all the Negev settlements. Here live the elite of the Kibbutzim, youngsters mostly, brought up in northern settlements, who have hived off from their parents and volunteered for one of the hardiest pioneering jobs in the world today. Thirty or forty of them together take possession of a strategic site selected by the Jewish Agency; pitch their tents, pipe the water and begin the job of growing vegetables and fruit in the middle of the desert. Nirim, which I visited later on the same day, lies 70 miles farther south, and only six miles from the Egyptian frontier. Its settlers—an equal number of boys and girls—had been there three years when the war started, and few of them now are over 25. For six months, they held out in deep shelters against bombing, shelling and ground attacks. I lunched in their dugout dining room lighted by an ingenious periscope, whose mirror rotated so as to catch the sunlight all day long and reflect it deep under-ground. The whole scene was so like a Technicolor film of life inside a Western stockade—a boy's own paper dream of adventure life—that it was difficult to remember that these children, out on their own, seventy-five miles behind the Egyptian front line, had saved for Israel just half of the territory allotted her by Uno. Of the thirty-four Negev settlements only four were evacuated or over-run by an Egyptian army of some forty thousand men. The rest (including one sited six hundred yards from the large Arab town of Beersheba) held out until relieved by the Israel offensive. Casualties were very heavy, both among the settlers and in the relieving Army brigades.

On May 15th, there were many in Tel-Aviv who advised evacuating the Negev and concentrating on the defence of the main coastal plain. But Ben Gurion said "No. The two decisive battles will be fought in Jerusalem and in the Negev." This is exactly what happened. The first Israeli campaign achieved the relief of Jerusalem. Meanwhile, the Negev settlements were supplied by an airlift of old Ansons and Dakotas, which had to land by night on temporary air strips built by the settlers in the midst of the Egyptian Army. This went on from May 15th until the end of December.

It is easy to see the importance of Jerusalem. But why did Ben Gurion call the Negev and not Galilee the second priority? Is it because of the oil, uranium and iron ore which its southern hills are supposed to contain? The answer is far less complex. The Negev is more than one-half of the smallest country in the world. Irrigated, and with areas allocated for industrial development, it will within ten years sustain one million people, against a present population of sixty thousand Bedouins and three thousand Jews. Without the Negev and the challenge to the pioneering Socialist spirit which it represents, Israel would soon degenerate into a Garden Ghetto. The second reason for its importance is the fact that eight miles of the Negev territory allocated to Israel is a coastal strip of the Gulf of Akaba. Despite the pictures of Tommies digging in round "the port," there is nothing at the northern end of the Gulf save a miserable Arab village on the Transjordan side of the frontier. Next comes Israel's eight miles of coast line and then Egypt. Common sense would dictate a single port to serve all three peoples, and this is what the Jews want to build.

Their special interest in the port has been caused by the Uno decision which quite rightly gave the northern end of the Dead Sea to the Arabs. This meant the total loss to the Jews of the Palestine Potash plant near Jericho, the source of their second most important export. It was to some extent compensated by the Uno decision to give Israel the area at the southern end of the Dead Sea, where another potash plant has been built. But how is this potash to be moved? Before May 15th, it went by boat up the Dead Sea. Now that is impossible. That is why the Jews want to build a port at Akaba.

Israel's plans for developing the Negev seem harmless enough. Why have they roused Mr. Bevin? Apparently the Chiefs of Staff have laid it down that Egypt, Transjordan and Iraq should form a continuous defensive belt against Russia. The Negev, if irrigated and populated by the Jews, would break this strategic continuity. So for the defence of freedom and democracy the Negev must remain a desert; and the Foreign Office condemns as aggressive imperialism Israel's desire to make it flow with Jewish milk and honey. It is not surprising that the Israeli politicians resent this sort of language and the thinking which lies behind it. But none of those with whom I talked showed any great alarm. They know, even if Mr. Bevin doesn't, that the battle of the Negev is over. The Uno decision that it should be Jewish has been ratified with Jewish blood. They also know that if Britain intends to challenge this, she will have to use British troops, since no Arab is any longer prepared to fight for the Negev—or for the British.

The alternative, of course, is to give up the odd theory that in the Middle East only deserts can be friendly to Great Britain.

R. H. S. CROSSMAN

A LONDON DIARY

This has been a week in which, if we were logical—which fortunately few of us are—we should stop all long-term activities, like paying instalments on our old-age endowment policies or putting down our children's names for their future schools. It is not only the horridly familiar smell of the news from the Middle East; our more lugubrious experts have combined to be exceptionally definite and depressing in everything they have said or published. The world's food is running out. . . . Those Bikini fishes—the ones that were not killed—are radio-active, swimming about infecting other fish in other areas. . . . Our only hope is to persuade the heavy-breeding countries, like India and China, to breed less. . . . And yet—it's extraordinary how personal cares still affect us against all reason. Is that a stopping come out of a back tooth, and does it mean the loss of the tooth this time? A fleeting thought reminds us: "Doesn't matter, if we're to be bombed, starved or disintegrated before long." But against the verdict of the dentist on the tooth, everything ceases to count, from the moment the tongue finds the cavity. "A willing suspension of disbelief" is what many forms of art require, for our enjoyment: what science and the newspapers need from us to-day, to be bearable, is involuntary suspension of belief for most of the time. They get it.

* * *

Lord Goddard told us last week that we must not shoot burglars on our own premises any more. Most of us thought we could, especially if they were armed. Indeed, we used to be allowed to: the result came under the heading of a particular form of justifiable homicide called Chance Medley. But Chance Medley has been done away with—he did not tell us when—and, as the law now stands, if we do act on our former privilege we are still "immune from corporal punishment" (*i.e.*, presumably, will neither be hanged nor imprisoned), but our "goods may be forfeit," however that works out. Anyway, it is an unlawful practice and we must refrain. *Caveat emptor*, indeed: "Let the buyer beware." So passes one of Emptor's few remaining rights, to keep what he has bought, after he has bought it, however unwisely. Poor old Emptor—the odds against him or her are increasing all the time in these days! When *caveat emptor* first became an accepted principle of trade, the buyer had only the personal wiles of the seller, unaided by perverted science and craftsmanship, with which to cope. But now if I buy, as I did recently, what I believed to be a reliable chrome-finished electric toaster, I am surrounded by unseen adversaries, specialists in their own line, brilliantly trained to do me down at the moment of purchase.

* * *

Admittedly our British craftsmen are as skilful as ever, but their ability is at present mainly used in spreading material as thinly as possible. The chrome plating on my toaster turns out to be a really wonderful job of making the minimum cover the maximum, temporarily at least. Science has also been called in against me and my helpless kind: it turns out that the chrome has been deposited not on brass but on iron, and this is now quite a usual commercial practice, though the manufacturers know that the finish cannot possibly last because chrome will not join with ferrous metals. But a method has been found of making iron look like brass—so remarkably like, in fact, that the shop assistant, who was quite knowledgeable about his wares, himself believed that there was brass under the chrome on my toaster. After a very little use, however, the top surface has almost disappeared, and, instead, rust is showing. My present united enemies, the fine British craftsman and the gifted British scientist, have triumphed over silly old Emptor again. (And before they got at me, of course, to induce me to buy the toaster at all, I was subjected to a subtle barrage of modern salesmanship, which formerly Emptor did not have to combat.) Just *how* is the buyer to beware nowadays? And how much further is this process of raising the odds against him going to go?

* * *

One's heart sinks at the idea of self-respecting workmen being required to do their job, aware that its first object is to deceive rather than give service, and that any effort they put into it will be wasted. I read the other day the statement of a boy, interviewed for his first job, who said to the foreman, "I'm a good worker," to be told, "We don't want a good worker; we want a fast worker." But one's heart sinks a great deal more at the knowledge—coming rapidly, in my case, through Danish friends—of what this principle of sale-at-any-cost has already meant to our prestige in places abroad, where one form of *caveat emptor* is unfortunately quite easy to put into action: nothing forces them to buy British. Cups that crack when tea is poured into them, stockings laddering without cause, electrical goods like my toaster—the sad tale I heard in Copenhagen has, I know, been rightly told in these columns by others before me, and I will not elaborate on it. But Danes, in my experience, have a nice sense of humour: how merrily those I know will laugh over the Lord Chief Justice's latest stricture, suspecting, as they must by now, that nothing in my house bought since the war is really worth shooting any burglar to preserve.

* * *

In the circumstances, it is interesting to hear, from people just returned from the Far North, that *caveat emptor* as an idea has now reached the Esquimo, in reverse. It is the seller who is newly on guard in the frozen wastes. There is a great demand for portable wireless sets. By day the good hunter does as he has always done—crouches motionless hour after hour, spear upraised, beside the blow-hole of a seal, waiting for the creature to come within striking distance. By night, in his igloo, he listens to the prices from the fur markets in Montreal and New York, in order not to be done by the local trader. It is somehow a pleasing picture. The Arctic is also responsible—this is irrelevant to both buying and selling, but seems to me worth noting on its own—for the finest example of marital tactlessness of which I have heard for years. One of the party of explorers and surveyors who supplied the information about the wireless sets is an Englishman whose first wife was an Esquimo, and he is now married to an American. On his latest homecoming she naturally fussed about him, producing every delicacy she had in tins, but in her excitement mislaid the tin-opener. "My first wife," he said—not in reproach, just as an observation—"used to open them with her teeth." No wonder the Americans say our men make good lovers but unsatisfactory husbands: this seems to me the type that would probably forget flowers on an anniversary, too.

* * *

How reprehensibly satisfying it is to hear someone else voicing one's lowest thoughts, unashamed. Last week the *News Chronicle* said the groundnut scheme was one of the most exciting (*sic*) projects of our time. The *Evening Standard* said it was a dreadful disappointment so far: both agreed that it was enormously important for Britain that it should succeed. A woman opposite me in the bus said to her neighbour, "Aren't you glad that African nut thing isn't going right? The moment they get all the marge they want, that'll be the end of importing butter for you and me. Last we'll see of it, you mark my words." How I loathe marge.

* * *

Critic wrote last week of the pleasure of taking children to a first-class show of "Christmas magic," somewhat marred by frequent and unfunny political jokes. My experience this season has been much the same but, I think, more objectionable. Last week was pantomime week for us: I took my small boy and his particular friend to the two shows which, I had been told, were the best of the many that London has provided for children this year. In both, the funny men's patter, especially the "dame's" had a good many political references which struck me as pointless, but also almost as many sexy *double entendres*, and a few gags so blatantly if obscurely vulgar that there was not even any secondary meaning to them. To the children, aged nine and ten, I am quite sure these were as unimportant, because incomprehensible, as the other stuff about the Government, the Tribunal and such—no more, in effect, than dull bits of adult nonsense filling in the time till the funny men were ready to be knocked flying, run over, and generally discomfited again, to everyone's satisfaction. What I particularly disliked about these sallies was that their only point, because they were so feeble as humour, was that they were something for grown-up people to snigger about in the presence of children: it was having the children listening, but not understanding, which gave them whatever erotic interest they had. This seems to me revolting. Revolting, that is, as between one adult on the stage and another in the audience. Since it doesn't amuse children, even if it doesn't harm them either, why must we have either political or sexual innuendo in pantomime? Is it because the parents wouldn't bring the children otherwise? Surely our entertainment requirements haven't sunk quite so low as that?

* * *

The Post Office is running what is, for the Civil Service, such a high-powered advertising campaign to get telephone operators—assuring us "The Telephonist's Job is a Good Job"—that I suppose they must be pretty short of suitable trainees. I wonder if they are setting the standard of pedantry and refinement too high for ordinary mortals to reach in large enough numbers? Certainly I feel now that I should be turned down on both counts if I applied. Three days ago I had to put through a personal call to a friend in Cambridge. The operator failed to catch the name: "You wish to speak to Mr. *Whom?*" she said. The use of the accusative case, after a preposition, though correct, has surely an intimidating ring. I repeated the name: Bowden. But she kept hearing it as Dowden. "No, no," I said. "*B*-O—. *B*-O, as in—." I could not think, and then advertising came to my help. "B-O as in Body Odour." There was a considerable pause. "O as in Oswald, madam," said a freezing voice, and I was forthwith connected with Cambridge.

E. Arnot Robertson

THIS ENGLAND

Prizes are awarded of £1 for the first entry and 5/- for each of the others printed.

Paste entries on postcard or slip of paper and give details of origin. Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

To encourage conversation—a psychological point—a loud-speaker relays the day's radio programmes continuously from 11 a.m. to 8 o'clock in the evening.—Bournemouth *Daily Echo*. (J. A. Franklin.)

A woman at Saltburn, Yorks, had the raffia handbag she sent to a friend in Chicago returned to her because it came under the Hay and Straw Order and could not be sent without a permit.—*The People*. (H. Forsyth.)

Birth control is not mentioned, the purpose of the manual being rather to assist the young Christian whose interest is awakened.—Book review in the *Christian*. (L. A. Richardson.)

The Mall is a Royal Way through St. James's Park. But it is alleged that, more than once, debutantes compelled to travel to the Palace in cabs or small cars without luxurious springs have arrived with their coiffeurs shaken to pieces.—*News Chronicle*. (Elkan Allan.)

He urged that a pedestrian crossing should be installed. He knew the boys would not use the crossing, but if they put one there, then the council's responsibility would end.—Report in the *Evening Standard*. (Howard Pursey.)

A suggestion from Petersfield Rural Council that the Parish Council should propose names for the Malthouse Estate was, after some discussion, held over until the next meeting, when a ballot will be taken of the proposals. The general feeling was that the name "Malthouse" should be preserved and that the street names should have some alcoholic significance.—*Hants and Sussex News.* (Miss P. J. House.)

Waterman Bob Woods, 31, has been spending eight hours a day for two months at the hard task of staying put.

Bob sits in a boat under London's Charing Cross bridge and waits for someone to fall into the Thames and be rescued.—*Daily Mirror.* (W. FitzGerald.)

A huge azure shield quartered with fleas couchant and rats courant formed the centre piece above the stage at the Town Hall, High Wycombe, on Friday last, when the Wycombe Division Conservative and Unionist Association held its annual dance.—*Bucks Free Press.* (N. Papworth.)

BALLAD OF STRANGEWAYS GAOL

Margaret Allen may not be insane by the usual tests but she is certainly not normal . . . Not a criminal type but one of those unfortunate misfits of our civilisation.—*Manchester Guardian,* Jan. 10.

A feeble-witted murderess
They hanged in Strangeways Gaol—
No plea nor prayer that life could spare,
No argument prevail;
Though all may plead, and some succeed,
That plea was doomed to fail.

Admit no flaw within the law,
Say justice must be blind,
The verdict passed is not the last,
If grounds for grace they find.
But why this case obtained no grace
Disturbs the layman's mind.

Though feeble wit does not acquit
The guilt of homicide,
Some win their plea though they may be
Condemned to death when tried.
What random chance, what circumstance
Makes mercy justified?

It is no time to pardon crime
When violence is rife,
But why give some the maximum,
Some, neither death nor "life"?
Some may receive a full reprieve
For "doing in" a wife.

Some murder with a hammer blow,
Some poison by degrees,
And some effect by gross neglect
The victim's planned decease—
For all the State may mitigate
The direst penalties.

Here they commute, there execute,
Though all as guilty seem,
Here they relent in punishment,
Since prison may redeem,
And few to-day are called to pay
The penalty supreme.

To get away with murder is
No such uncommon thing,
Not every one for murder done
They to the scaffold bring.
Insane or sane reprieves may gain—
This woman had to swing.

A life pays forfeit for a life
And blood for blood may cry;
The law in force must take its course,
But many wonder why,
When some live still although they kill,
This woman had to die.

Sagittarius.

MEN OVER THE WATER

Seen in January against the solid snows on An t-Soeach, the grey waters of the Cromarty Firth look like a hard slate scratched by angry claws of wind. Along the West shore there have lived for the past nine months many hundreds of the European Volunteer Workers whom Britain has imported for motives in which humanitarian sentiment and economic self-interest have been somewhat confused. There are hostels, scattered about, in which forestry workers and labourers on the farms have been given asylum; and at Evanton there is a large, admirably organised Educational Centre, established by the National Coal Board, from which over 1,500 men, after a stay of 3-5 months, have passed on to the various technical Training Centres *en route* for the mines. So far as the N.C.B. is concerned, the importation of E.V.W.s is now finished. It was among the last three hundred still in the Centre and among the land-workers in the hostels that I spent some days exploring the pattern of the E.V.W. mind. In the comparative isolation of the North, where there is instinctive sympathy with emigrés, and before there had been much opportunity for reaction to the impact of Britain's crowded way of life, there would be a good chance, I thought, of studying the E.V.W. in his "natural" state.

There was. The volunteers for the coal industry—and it was of these that I saw most—had evidently been screened with care, and represented probably the cream of the E.V.W.s in this country; but they and the land-workers together made up a reasonably typical cross-section. The difficulty for the observer is that the threads in the pattern are so mixed. After many hours of listening to the life-stories, views and ambitions of Balts, Poles, Ukranians, Yugoslavs, Rumanians and assorted Central Europeans from a wide range of social classes, I still hesitate to express a decided opinion whether the E.V.W. scheme was a good idea and will prove a success.

Was the selection in the D.P. camps in Germany sound? I should say "Yes"—in nine cases out of ten. My impression, confirmed by many of the more intelligent E.V.W.s themselves, is that 5 per cent. of the arrivals are dubious assets, and 5 per cent. definitely undesirables—potential gangsters whose eventual disposal is going to present the Home Office with an awkward problem. The remaining 90 per cent.—judged (should we say?) with the eye of an Adjutant-General—are "promising material." Youth is resilient; and among these young men, mostly in the 20-25 age group, there are few obvious signs of war-damage, either to physique or morale. They are vigorous, alert, responsive to decent treatment and keen enough to work hard. In the Evanton camp the standard of conduct has been exemplary; and, in sharp contrast to the attitude of many of the refugees from Hitlerism, there seemed among the men to be a general feeling of gratitude, the sense of a debt owed, to the country which had given them shelter. Some were uncouth; the majority well-mannered, decent types; many charming, and only a few soured.

Are they assimilable, and do they want to be assimilated? Here the first uncertainty begins to arise. Comparatively few, I am convinced, intend to stay long in the under-manned occupations—mining, farming and textiles—for which they have volunteered. In this matter there appears to be a wide-spread and regrettable misunderstanding. The landing conditions, said to have been read slowly to each man in his own language, stipulated that *permission to stay in Britain* for a minimum of one year was guaranteed, but that the status of E.V.W. would carry with it *for an indefinite period* an obligation to accept direction to specified work. Either because of faulty explanation by the selectors, or through a universal conspiracy of miscomprehension on the part of the selected, every E.V.W. will now assure you that he is entitled, after one year's *corvée,* to seek freely the employment of his choice. I was bombarded with questions how entry might be secured into universities, into skilled (and highly paid) engineering trades, into this or that attractive profession. Unreasonable questions? On the contrary—natural and understandable. I was left wondering in my mind whether mixed British motives in the whole scheme were not to blame for a situation likely to lead to trouble. If we wanted to be Good Samaritans, why insist that young men drawn from the professional classes must volunteer for manual work as a condition of their entry? If we were concerned purely with the needs of under-manned industries, why not have confined the scheme strictly to those whose background would lead them to accept calloused hands as natural? As it is, unless Ministry of Labour and police surveillance is surprisingly effective, there is going to be a steady drift, twelve months hence, from the land to the city lights; and I shall be astonished if even the N.C.B. holds 30 per cent. of its E.V.W.s for two years.

But the question goes deeper than choice of employment. Out of a hundred men whom I asked whether they would like to be naturalised, only three answered that they had decided to seek British citizenship—one, a Lithuanian ex-student (22), because he saw here (poor laddy!) "perfect freedom"; one, a Hungarian ex-cavalry officer (43), because he hoped to bring his children from Budapest to be educated in England and himself to make a career in the "Western Union Army"; one, a cheerful Slovene spiv (34) from Maribor (he had "had fun" working for Siemens-Schuckert during the war) because he found British girls good in bed.

From the standpoint of their own ambitions, the E.V.W.s struck me as roughly divisible into three categories. First, the adventurous. These, in the main the lads of twenty, are scarcely distinguishable from the normal stream of pre-war emigrants who sought fortune overseas. They have jumped at the opportunity of coming to Britain in the hope that, in a couple of years, they can amass by hard work enough capital to enable them to pay for an ocean passage and make a start in South Africa or South America—*not,* for preference, in the United States. For these boys—say, 10 per cent. of the whole—Britain is just a big, and quite agreeable transit-camp, not a permanent future home. They will do a good job here, then go—if they can.

Secondly, the seekers of a comfortable life. Some are the born spivs, the "wide boys," the natural recruits for every black and grey market in the world, whom I should include among the 10 per cent. of "questionables" of all types. Others—and this applies particularly to the Polish element—have just no desire to soil their hands more than can be helped. They have no particular wish to settle in Britain, but they have heard (correctly enough) that the new Poland expects hard work of her citizens. That is not for them. So, rationalising indolence, they will tell you that Russian Commissars, whip in hand, stride down the streets of Warsaw, and that return home would mean for them instant execution or Siberia. If their interlocutor happens to know Poland and laughs at this nonsense, they are bitterly offended.

Finally, and these form the vast majority of the E.V.W.s, there are the political fanatics, whose obsession is that, given a little patience, they will have a chance of serving in an Anglo-American crusade to drive the Russians behind the Urals and "liberate" Eastern Europe from "Communist tyranny." Here, in my judgment, is the root of the problem which the E.V.W.s present. I do not suggest that it would be fair to lump them all together as Fascists. They are not. I recall talks with likeable youngsters from the Baltic States with whose plight one has deep sympathy, and whose faith in democratic institutions was as strong as John Stuart Mill's. I recall the kindly, inarticulate, bewildered peasant from the Odessa region: his little vineyard and cottage pulverised by one of Hitler's Panzer Divisions, he had been impressed into the *Wehrmacht,* deserted after six-months, made his way to Bosnia, where he fought for nearly two years with Tito's partisans (from what convictions he could not explain), and then dodged back on foot to his vineyard—only to be swept in the debris of German retreat to a camp in Westphalia. Such men are just plain home-sick—too home-sick to contemplate yet the idea of permanent emigration or absorption by Britain. Their minds revolt.

But there are other, more ferocious, souls. At a Ukrainian forestry-workers' sing-song I attended, a youthful, blonde camp-leader who had probably served, if I am not mistaken, in the Hitler Jugend S.S. ranks, exhorted his comrades to consecrate their lives to marching through blood to the restoration (is it after nine or ten centuries?) of an independent Ukraine; toasts were drunk to the death of the "Russian beasts" and—to my consternation—to "our brave British fellow-fighters." In vain did I tell these (individually attractive, but politically hysterical) irreconcilables that the British workers whom they were likely to meet were definitely not prepared to support a Third World War in order that a new flag might flutter over Kiev. If Britain were so blind or cowardly, they said, then either the Americans would realise that only killing could defeat Communism, or the Underground would succeed itself in overthrowing the Soviet Union. That Underground! I should have been more impressed by the tales I heard of thousands of guerrillas fighting in the Ukraine and Lithuania if the Polish crusaders had not assured me that whole areas of Poland, which I know from personal observation to be as tranquil as Hampshire, are "held" to-day by Underground troops.

To be anti-Communist is an intelligible, if sterile, attitude. But when anti-Communism is wedded to chauvinistic nationalism and a belief that cold steel (failing atom bombs) is the only argument, the mixture becomes explosive. In time, it may be, these passionate emigrés will cool off; but my visit to the Cromarty Firth left me with the feeling that, though we have secured in the E.V.W. scheme a useful temporary reinforcement of our agricultural and industrial man-power, and—to the extent that they are assimilated—a transfusion of vigorous blood, the present intake of 80,000 is the maximum we can absorb without risk of serious social and political friction. However much one may like and sympathise with them individually, these bloody-minded romantics in the mass could easily form a contingent of men "over the water" too large for our comfort.

Even as it is, I am not happy about the way the scheme has been managed. The highest praise is due to the Coal Board for its plan of preliminary Education Centres where not merely are the essential rudiments of basic English learnt, but the rough edges are taken off, frayed nerves healed and some acclimatisation to the tolerant British way of living made possible. Of conditions in textile factories I cannot speak. But I have learned enough of the experience of E.V.W. land-workers, too often regarded by farmers as slave-labour very properly provided by the Government, to be sure that it would have been much better to make these men the direct employees of the Ministry of Agriculture. If many turn sour and escape into criminality, their farming employers will have their share of blame.

Further, the Ministry of Education has fallen down on the job. The N.C.B. apart, little or nothing is being done to teach these men, or (I imagine) the women, anything about the country in which they have come to live. They are very sensitive—and, God knows, they have good cause—to unfriendliness. They were mystified why a comrade who had entered a house to make a proposal of marriage (to his girl's father) should have been accused of an attempt at rape; and many I talked to could not understand why they should have been told by workers they had met in pubs that they had better go home and not take the bread out of British mouths. Ignorant of British social habits, they were completely unaware that Britain had ever experienced unemployment, or that loss of a job was still a lurking fear; in their view this was a rich and permanently prosperous country, and the *raison d'être* and methods of trade unionism were a closed book to them. If these men are to "mix" well, a compulsory course of adult education in the hostels, covering social conventions and the elements of economic and political history, seems indicated. Only so is there any chance of building in them assimilability and a saner realism capable of resisting the wholly pernicious and, at present, deplorably strong influence of the emigrés Associations—Polish, Ukrainian, Latvian—whose liquidation seems to me to be an almost essential pre-requisite if the 80,000 E.V.W.s are ever to be assimilated in a peaceful democracy. For the rest, it is up to them—and us.

As I drove from Evanton to Inverness along the shore of the Firth, a big group of white swans seemed to be holding an amicable evening *ceilidh* in the shallows. On an islet, a few hundred yards away, three solitary swans flapped their wings—separate, angry, "over the water." Were they, I wondered, unassimilable, tiresome fellows, or just the unhappy victims of lack of sensible good comradeship in the crowd?

Inverness. AYLMER VALLANCE

THE CHILD LISTENER

(By a Correspondent)

IF the B.B.C. is an educational force, if it has, as Sir William Haley has said, a "social responsibility," it can fairly be asked to review its policy towards the child listener. At present the programmes designed expressly for children consist of the Schools Broadcasts (two hours a day, five days a week, during school term) and the afternoon Children's Hour. The programme for schools maintains a high standard: it is informative and lively, and its listeners undoubtedly include numerous adult housewives who appreciate particularly the programme's interpretation of current affairs. For children, however, the availability of these broadcasts is very limited. Although it is claimed that about fifteen thousand schools now have broadcast lessons, this is only half the total number and the majority make only a restricted use of the service. Even in the equipped schools, probably few individual children hear more than one 20-minute programme each week. Moreover, these broadcasts are part of the formal education system. Thus the Children's Hour remains the only programme designed for children listening voluntarily in their leisure time.

In view of the range of ages for which the Children's Hour must cater, its producers have obviously a difficult task. The age-group selected as the main target would appear to be that between six and twelve: the under-five listener is rarely catered for, and some of the material seems designed to appeal to 'teen-age children who have graduated to the adult programmes—not always to their advantage. There are also discernible in Children's Hour the untypical middle-class assumptions that children normally have nurseries and nannies and "go on" to boarding schools as they get older.

The fact that such a small amount of broadcasting time is available to children in their own right is to be deplored for a number of reasons. In the first place, the child develops a habit of not listening. The older children may join the family circle for Dick Barton and Just William, or occasionally for a Quiz Programme; but during much of the time which a child spends at home the wireless set is switched on for grown-up listening, and the child conducts his own affairs to a background of speech and music, little of which impinges on the conscious mind and still less emerges into comprehension. The indifference to the spoken word which these conditions produce is well known to teachers. Living against an unintelligible background of sound, the child loses the capacity for listening and concentrating, and his formal education suffers thereby.

Even from the B.B.C.'s own point of view, the present policy, or lack of policy, as regards children is short-sighted. The film industry does not neglect to build up its future public: children's matinees are an investment in future adult patronage. What sort of patronage does the B.B.C. expect from its younger adult listeners who have been denied, as children, an adequate proportion of programme time designed for them—true to nature and life, yet stimulating to the imagination? The obvious tendency will be for young listeners of to-day to grow up predominantly into the ready-made Light division in the B.B.C.'s audience—adherents of Dick Barton and indiscriminate "background" sound.

What do I suggest? For the older child, extension of broadcasts at least to Saturday mornings and school holiday mornings. These are not peak adult listening times, and few would miss greatly the programmes which would be supplanted. The content of these broadcasts should obviously differ from those angled expressly for school hours; there should be no room in them for the consciously didactic. The Saturday morning hour could well be filled with features such as travel talks, news of a nature exciting to children, stories, plays, sing-songs in which the children could join, and perhaps a Children's Listening Club in which the children could take part as critics and contributors. In holiday time, let recording vans go with children to Scout and Guide camps, follow them on school journeys and family holidays.

It is with the under-fives, however, that the B.B.C. has a real opportunity to become an educational innovator. The 1944 Education Act requires Local Authorities to make nursery school provision for the under-fives. But nursery schools are dependent on new buildings and more teachers; and at present there is difficulty in finding either, even for children over five. The young mother, on her morning round of household duties, is relentlessly tailed by one or more toddlers who will never enter a nursery school. But because mother was brought up on "Dance Bands of the 'Thirties," she does not sing to them "London Bridge" or "Sally Go Round the Sun." She switches on the wireless to successive half-hours of tango orchestras, refined sopranos and cinema organ music. Surely a few short interludes each morning for the under-fives is not too much to ask of a nation which is not going to be able to carry out its promise of nursery schools for all, at any rate for a long time.

Programmes must be short—ten minutes at a time. They could include nursery rhymes, stories simply told (with sound used imaginatively), and perhaps an Ann Driver "Music and Movement" session designed for 3-5-year-olds in the home. Simple apparatus such as the home provides—spoons and clothes pegs—could be brought into use for "number" games and play with the "wireless teacher." Each programme should be framed in terms of the small house or flat—for the child in the kitchen, not in the middle-class nursery.

While the child listened, the mother would get a few minutes' peace; and she might also become interested herself. Her imagination captured, she might begin to ask for booklets, such as are published for the Schools Broadcasts, aimed at fostering the purpose of the programmes. It might even happen that, with these programmes to stimulate and help her, the mother would take a greater part in the early formal education of her children. Something would be achieved, even if the programmes did no more, in this direction, than to make the mother aware that she is already starting her child's education when she teaches it the simplest tune, or lets it shape and bake a bit of grubby dough. Not that this would supplant the need for nursery schools. Rather it would create, I think, an informed demand for them, not from mothers who simply want to "get children out of the way," but from those who had been taught by broadcast programmes for the under-fives to see the purpose in nursery school methods.

THIS MATTER OF HEDGES

The hedge so dominates the English landscape that we have come to regard it as an integral part of the farming scene. But we are deceived, for it is neither natural nor traditional to farming in this country. Technically, it is no more than a tool, a piece of equipment developed by our ancestors to meet the agricultural needs of their time. Historically, it was the symbol of violent rural change, an intruder into our countryside, and the grandfathers of men now living risked their necks to destroy the hated lines of thorn which were robbing them of their birthright. And politically it stands as a memorial and a warning. For the hedge is the gravestone of the English peasantry and its bitter, silent warning should haunt all those who deal with agricultural planning to-day.

For the hedge is primarily neither an ornament nor an amenity. It is a device for controlling the movement of farm animals and its character proclaims its origins. For it is organic, living and growing, and from this we can deduce several things. Firstly, it was the product of a pre-industrial age when local men and materials could meet this particular need more efficiently than any factory. Secondly, by its nature it demands constant care and maintenance and was, therefore, designed by men who could rely on cheap and plentiful labour. Thirdly, it is fixed and immobile, the tool of a farming system secure, confident and careless of any need for adaptation to changed circumstances.

The hedge, in short, was the product of the Agricultural Revolution. It was the physical means whereby the men of George III's time adapted the farming landscape to the new developments of their age. And though that was over a century ago, the pattern they established endures to this day and the dead hand of the past controls, through the hedges, the shape and size of the workshops we call fields and the factories we call farms.

But the agricultural assumptions which created the hedge have now passed. In particular, labour is now scarce and expensive, so that maintenance is all too easily postponed to the next month which may never come. Indeed, in many districts it is painful how many hedges are stock-proof only by virtue of the barbed wire casually nailed along them. Further, land to-day is precious, there are no more huge wastes to be reclaimed profitably and hedges occupy an astonishing amount of space, probably in all not less than one acre in thirty of our entire farmland. And this considerable area is not so much sterilised as infected, for the hedges harbour weeds and vermin. Equally obsolete are the principles on which so many hedges are sited. Even in their own day, the men of the Agricultural Revolution were not guided solely by considerations of agricultural efficiency—the imaginative student of large-scale Ordnance Survey maps will often glimpse little groups of argumentative men in three-cornered hats and catch faint echoes of discreet huddles over the port in the manor-house. In any case, they planned for the horse, not the tractor, and, in the days before tile-pipes, relied for drainage on the frequent open ditches which form so many of our field-boundaries. Above all, the coming of the ley, which makes grass into a ploughland crop, has greatly weakened the old distinction between arable and pasture fields—and, broadly speaking, the plough requires big fields, the well-managed grazing herd small ones. Farming to-day, therefore, demands something cheaper, simpler, cleaner and more flexible than the hedge and this modern industry can provide in a variety of fence-forms, including portable electric fencing. And that is why the irregular hum of the bulldozer is heard in the land and the maps show hedges which are no longer there. The farmer is adapting old tools to new needs.

Now, of course, there is an agricultural case for the hedge. When properly maintained, it is an effective field-division and, unlike its modern rivals, provides valuable shelter for men, stock, crops and soil as well as nesting-places for useful birds. The question, however, is not abolition but modernisation and every hedge should be judged on its particular industrial merits. If it is not pulling its economic weight, if it is not doing the right job in the right place, it should go down. And unquestionably, by these standards, a very large number of our hedges are useless; therefore, by reducing production, dangerous; and could be abolished with little loss and great gain. To preserve them for their artistic value is to condemn modern traffic to use Old London Bridge.

Unfortunately, so deep is the gulf between the urban mind and rural reality, the townsman seldom realises this. To him, with his uncanny flair for the obsolete, the hedge is "picturesque," along with rabbits and pigeons, derelict woodlands, collapsing barns and similar economic abominations. For even to-day he is, too often, enthralled by those strange and dangerous heresies which are among the most distressing by-products of the seventy years depression endured by British farming. He tends to regard the countryside as a "national heritage," a vague phrase with several curious implications, notably the habit of regarding farmland as public property where anyone may roam at will; as a playground in which farmers dwell half as pets, half as hired landscape gardeners; or as a museum-piece to be preserved under the administrative equivalent of a glass case. Coupled with this is the weird fallacy that farming is an unprogressive industry, a sort of technical half-wit, a sad case of arrested economic development. But all this is anathema. The countryside is none of these things; it is a rural Black Country where the needs of the productive system take priority, the home of a great, proud and singularly flexible industry which is constantly adapting itself to changed circumstances. There is, therefore, nothing absolute in the hedge.

But there are other and graver lessons in the hedge, for it was the weapon whereby Technical Efficiency achieved, at bitter social cost, one of the earliest and greatest of all its victories in this country. The coming of the root-crops in the Eighteenth Century provided, for the first time in history, adequate winter fodder and therefore created new stock, for the increase in health and numbers allowed scientific breeding on an unprecedented scale. But how could the new stock be controlled, how could the new methods be exploited in the fields of the time? For in the traditional fields of England there were no hedges.

Now, we moderns have forgotten these Open Fields, the huge stretches of ploughland patterned incoherently into a multitude of strip-holdings across which winter corn, spring corn and bare fallow ponderously chased each other in immemorial rotation. And in fields of this type, the economic home of the normal Englishman for a thousand years, corn was king, the herd a mere subsidiary; they could hold neither the stock nor the crops of the Agricultural Revolution. And so under the authority of Acts of Parliament, mostly between 1769 and 1830, the hedges came to England to divide these ancient fields into the enclosures we see to-day. The process was slow and arduous and, behold, when the men of the time lifted their eyes from the task of recreating farming they saw that one of the greatest social classes in the country had disappeared. In place of the peasantry whose prosperity and freedom had been for centuries the justified boast of English writers stood the miserable landless labourers of early Victorian times, solely dependant on inadequate wages eked out by poaching and charity. And for this the hedge was responsible.

For the hedge created one system of grazing by destroying another. The old Open Field farm was not merely a physical holding measured in acres, it included certain rights of turning stock into the fields when they were not under crops. And these grazing rights were the ladder whereby any villager could climb, for he could build up capital by running stock all the year round without cost to himself. When the hedges came, these rights perished and with them the economic basis of the peasant. He became a labourer and the last century has improved his condition but not changed his status.

Now, this startling piece of social engineering needs some analysis. Firstly, it was the work of men who, with all their failings, were driven by genuine technical zeal, and foreshadowed in professional pride and self-confidence Burnham's Managers. Indeed, their achievement was prodigious and the Mixed Farming they created is among the industrial triumphs of our race. Secondly, the social consequences were not deliberate. Greed and injustice there were in plenty but the destruction of the peasantry was an unexpected and accidental by-product of the drive for greater efficiency. Thirdly, much of the suffering could have been prevented. The State saw that economics were served but forgot to weigh the social cost. It patronised progress but neglected justice. It concentrated on the things which were easy to count, grain, stock and acres, but ignored the less ponderable effects on human quality. In fact, the whole story illustrates in crude but vivid fashion the occupational diseases to which the planner and technician are by nature prone.

This, of course, is a general warning to all those in authority. But it should be particularly heeded by those concerned with agricultural planning to-day. For the contrast between new methods and old is as clear to-day as it was in the days of George III; the national need is as least as great, the power and sphere of the State infinitely greater; and ultimate control is no longer in the hands of men in direct contact with rural life and work. Indeed, it says much for the political sense of our people, so typically incarnate in the County Agricultural Executive Committees, that valid complaints have been so few. Nevertheless, the danger is there, for it is so easy to slip into policies whose full consequences are not realised. Consider, for instance, this question of gang-labour. Men are scarce; certain types of farm-work are seasonal; what could be more natural or administratively more convenient than mobile gangs? Indeed, it is upon these that in the last decade much of our farm-production has depended. But now consider the effects on human quality. On the one hand, the mobile labourer never, except by accident, "sees a job through," sows where he reaps or harvests where he hoes. Thus he is divorced from the consequences of his work and something of the pride is taken out of his job. On the other hand, the farmer is driven to the concept, alien to the better side of rural life, of labour as a hired commodity which disappears after working hours, something hanging up on the hooks in a central store-house, to be taken down as required. A minor point, a mere tendency? Maybe, but nevertheless important. Look at the hedges; we have been warned.

NIGEL HARVEY.

HE LIES AWAKE

(For a Tune).

Hours, O you hours that creep,
Tell how my love lies?
With her gaiety undone
And her grief likewise?

In her coffin made of sleep
None can stir or grieve her, none,
Freed from laughter as from sighs:
We have laid the darkness, deep
In the hollows of her eyes.
Leave her in the earth of night
Till the early, early light
And the resurrected sun.

FRANCES CORNFORD

OLD VIC NATIONALISED

The widespread dissatisfaction with the present series of Old Vic performances has found many voices but all of these are off the note. The root cause of the trouble lies in the hasty wartime amalgamation of the organisation with the National Theatre Committee. Little thought was apparently given at the time to the confusion of ideas that must result when two organisations of different origin and ideals are suddenly called upon to work together for one object. In effect, each has robbed the other of some essential virtue. Much of the criticism that has been voiced shows a singular lack of appreciation of the main problem whilst expressing a sense of loss on one side of the equation or the other. For the rest, it deals with personal shortcomings that do not touch the problem itself. Moreover, every experienced theatrical manager knows that things are done in the heat of a strenuous season that seem wise at the time but afterwards prove not to be so. And it is fruitless to suggest that, if such and such persons had been in charge, the Old Vic would not be in its present position, for who shall say they would not have made worse mistakes?

In its origin and upbringing, the Old Vic was essentially a community theatre, endowed by a remarkable personality with clear-cut ideals and precise economical ways of doing things; it held an honourable record in the service of these ideals. The accent was upon youth; and this was reflected not only in the quality of the performances, but also in the prices charged for the seats and the salaries paid to the actors. On the other hand, the aims of the National Theatre Committee in those pre-war years were no less idealistic but decidedly less practical. They were inspired largely by the writings of Granville Barker and by the eager longings of enthusiasts who, gazing across the water at what had been accomplished in some of the capital cities of liberal Europe, desired to emulate those achievements at home. Perhaps in their concentration upon the building of a suitable theatre in which to house the national performances they tended to forget the impulses that brought these Continental institutions into being and the long, long years of artistic effort that made up the traditions upon which they rested. However that may be, it is easy to see now the incompatability that lay buried beneath the surface of this amalgamation. And the emergence of two supremely good actors, both with screen reputations, and their ability to pack the New Theatre at all performances during the feverish conditions following the grand climacteric of the war only helped to confuse the picture and to delay the day of reckoning for those who sought to give the Old Vic the authority and status of a national theatre as it were overnight.

A clear perception of all that is involved in the establishment of a national theatre is urgently needed. First, a national theatre company must be broad-based upon the best elements in contemporary theatrical life. It must have its roots deep in the theatrical tradition of the country even though its branches are bright with the green foliage of youth, which is only another way of saying that it must be fully representative. The time has come to call a halt to the dangerous assumption following the general theatrical hurly-burly after the war, that virtue resides only in youth. In the achievement of national status, judgment and experience are needed just as much as bright fantastications. This is particularly true to-day when national standards are in need of rehabilitation everywhere. Of the many practical problems that must be resolved in due time, I will mention only a few. A triple or, at least a double company of experienced as well as young artists will be needed since it has been proved impossible to cast satisfactorily both classical and modern plays from one company of normal size. Means will have to be devised to make it worth while for these representative artists to remain loyal to the service of the theatre against the commercial temptations of screen and television for long enough to achieve that superlative standard of ensemble acting that alone justifies national status and that cannot be achieved by any quick means nor by the dignified slumming of outstanding personalities, albeit at regular intervals. This will involve the creation of some form of charter that may well regulate the conditions of service in the national companies for generations of actors yet unborn. Then again, the extent to which the population of other cities than the Metropolis shall be given opportunities of seeing performances must be carefully considered since the whole nation, directly or indirectly, will be called upon to foot the bill. Here, I am in agreement with Priestley's view that there should be more than one company, although not solely for the reasons he advances. The right to give performances in the national theatre, and thereby to acquire national status, should be subject to certain qualifications and responsibilities. Any attempt to place all the national companies under one artistic direction should be strongly resisted. It would lead to similarity of approach to artistic problems; and the work of companies devoted to classical or modern drama would tend to go up and down according to the personal predilections of the chief artistic director. It is not straining criticism to point out that it is impossible for the Old Vic to achieve the full scope of such an enterprise unaided. For example, their work in the field of modern drama is negligible, which is to be expected for the reason I have already given. That they will become one of the national companies is a matter of course, the senior one, if need be, but certainly not the only one.

There is another ticklish problem to be reckoned with, which will recur at regular intervals. All theatrical history bears witness to the fact that outstanding achievement in the theatre is inspired by individuals and not by committees or cliques. To mention a few outstanding examples, the Russian Ballet, as we first knew it in Western Europe, owed its inspiration entirely to Diaghilev. Without Stanislavsky and Nemirovitch-Dantchenko there would have been no Moscow Art Theatre; the Old Vic itself would not be in existence to-day but for the inspired leadership of Lilian Bayliss. These are the rare people with the ability to establish traditions and maintain standards; and when they die the inspiration that illuminates their enterprises slowly fades, too. This temporary quality in all theatrical work will be a continuing anxiety to those charged with the responsibility for keeping the theatre artistically alive. Administrators and committees, however painstaking and efficient, will not do the trick. It is simple enthusiasm between artist and artist that is required. However difficult in co-operation this individual quality of inspiration may be, it is the pre-requisite to outstanding theatre.

One last point. It would be a mistake to mislead the public as to the size of the bill which they will eventually have to meet. Understatement would only prejudice them against the scheme. The million pounds which the Government is providing for the building is merely a beginning. Those who imagine that the theatre can be made to pay its way are deluding themselves. The yearly subvention that will be required will be very considerable. It is not right that this should be provided out of the funds of the Arts Council, thereby prejudicing the extremely valuable work they are doing in other directions. A separate and generous subsidy will be needed, one that will secure worthy representation of the national ideals.

Now that the Government has taken its decision in the matter of the site of the theatre, those of us who held contrary views must abandon them and support to our utmost, by uninvited criticism if by no other means, the work of preparation that must go forward in many directions. Meanwhile, our hope is that the Old Vic will rediscover its traditions and regain both its own and the public's confidence as one of our national companies.

Basil Dean

MEMORANDA MNEMONICA

Among the "Endomages of the Memorie" enumerated by Guilielmus Gratarolus Bergomatis in a book "Englished" by William Fulwood under the title of *The Castel of Memorie* in 1563, I find these: "Garlyke, Leekes, Oynions, also Cheese and Peason, Brothes, Potages and all over moyste thynges." To drink after meat, we are told, is very harmful; and "Frequented venerye doth hurte either with a full stomacke or a hungry, or after the whiche no slepe doth followe, or nere unto the Eclipse of the Moone, or wyth anye other than their owne spouse." It does no good to go through mire in cold times and barefooted; and "to sleepe hosed or shued especially with foule sockes" much hinders the memory. But there are "perticuler helpes of the memorie"; for example, "a temperate gladnes, and an honest delectation, especially in the meditation of the sciences," or the washing of one's feet often in warm water. Also, "the braynes of a Henne doth helpe the witte and the Memorye, in such sorte that it hathe brought some agayne to their wittes that beganne to dote."

Wilson's *Arte of Rhetorique* (1560) has much about memory. To preserve a good one we must keep a diet, eschew superfluities, sleep moderately, accompany with women rarely, and last of all "exercise the witte with cunning, of many thinges without booke, and ever to be occupied with one thing or other. For even as by labour the witte is whetted, so by lithernesse the witte is blounted." In his *Naturall and Artificial Directions for Health* (1600) William Vaughan recommended the bathing of the head four times a year with hot lye made of ashes, followed by two or three gallons of cold fountain water—"which sodaine powring down of old water, although it doth mightily terrifie you, yet neverthelesse it is very good, for thereby the naturall heate is stirred within the bodie, baldnesse is kept back, and the memory is quickened."

My own memory (being what it is, having never suffered "endomage" and needing no "perticuler helpes") is a thing I am never ashamed of until I try to master any system of mnemonics. Then I am sunk. "Thirty days hath . . ." I can remember, but I am defeated by, say:

> *Cult*-born Spenser having sung,
> Death *bunged* up his tuneful tongue.

And it would be no use for me to learn:

> William Wordsworth, *appy* born,
> Died, alas, a *guy* forlorn.

And I shall certainly not clutter up my mind with:

> That tragic swell,
> Old Æschylus,
> Was born in *vel*,
> And died in *rus*.

The system on which these rhymes are constructed is explained in *Memoranda Mnemonica*, by James Copner, M.A., Vicar of Elstow, published in 1893. His preface very rightly begins: "All systems of Mnemonics presuppose Memory." The system he invented presupposes not only memory, but a mathematical turn of mind. "Light travels, in round numbers, at the rate of 186,000 miles per second, reaching the earth in eight minutes." We may remind ourselves of these facts by such a stanza as the following:

> Light never lags, but thousands *ags*
> Of miles per second spins.
> From sun through space it runs its race
> To earth in just eight mins.

With the simple example of *ags* I refer to the table—to find that *a* stands for 1, but 1 also stands for *b* and *c*; *g* stands for 8, but 8 also stands for *ei* and *k*; and *s* stands for 6, but 6 also stands for *au* and *w*. It is all too difficult for me. "I might," says the Reverend James Copner, "recall the truth that the sun's mean distance from the earth is 91,430,000 miles by such a couplet as this:—

> To *na-fix* add *x's* three
> Mean distance of the sun to see.

He might: I never could. The wretched man adds complications: "As the initial letters of *S*ir *I*saac *N*ewton form the word SIN, we will give him that name . . . *Woe* is a natural consequence of sin. A *woe* will thus aptly indicate the year of his birth.

> The birth of SIN *a woe* declares,
> *Apep* his death, and *gu* his years.

But there are simple, unmathematical, uncoded examples which even I can make a shot at:

> 'Twixt se'nteen nine and eight-five
> This verbose doctor was alive.

Dr. Johnson? Right first time. But

> Sir Walter Scott, a poet great,
> Surely had a learned pate

—for this to be of any use to me I should have to remember that *pate* is to be split into *pa* and *te*, i.e., 71 and 32 (1771-1832). Can you wonder that I gave it up?

Alas, my memory being what it is, I shall never be able to forget the rhymes about Spenser and Wordsworth or such things as:

> *B-gad——B-gein*
> Did Browning shine

and:

> British Dryden, Dei gratiâ,
> Strange to say was born in *Asia*,

but the dates they enshrine I shall never know.

The one-time Vicar of Elstow is probably sound on dates; his opinions are open to question. Of Rossetti he says: "Some profess to admire his poetry and think they understand it, but his meaning is often egregiously obscure." Out of evident dislike for his subject he treats him to the plainest of lines:

> D. G. Rossetti
> Was a petty
> Poet and a pictor.
> Birth was his fate
> One eight two eight
> And death, eight two, his victor.

The answer, of course, is: 1828-1882.

No date is given for the Creation. For the Dissolution there is this comfort:

> The world is coming to an end,
> Is very certain, worthy friend,
> But how 'twill end, and when the day,
> The wisest mortal cannot say.

And now farewell, Mnemosyne.

DANIEL GEORGE

The Arts and Entertainment

ROUND THE GALLERIES

LAST summer's exhibition of the London Group was a long and tedious compilation of predominantly amateurish efforts sprawled around the badly-lit Academy Hall. The reputation of the Group is retrieved by the current exhibition at the Leicester Galleries of new works by Members proper, no outsiders being present to lower the average level of accomplishment. Style is predominantly Euston Road or New English Art Club, with a leavening of romantic post-Cubism and abstraction and Expressionism. The most coherent and satisfying of the paintings is Ruskin Spear's—as in a large proportion of mixed exhibitions in London. What one finds oneself thinking at so many of these shows is not "That's the Spear—is it a good one?" but "There's a good picture—ah yes, it's Spear." His vision reveals no strong personality, is commonplace (and old-fashioned). But it is a *vision*: something has clearly been *looked at*—honestly and sensitively, without fuss or egotism and with a rare power to evoke the character of the thing or place. This last quality is what is lacking in Coldstream's recent landscape on the same wall (though it is the most serious work in the show): it is like a conscientious and well-constructed piece of reportage that doesn't quite drive home its point. For the rest, there is a conspicuous Smith, agreeable works by Pasmore, Eileen Agar, Uhlman, Dawson and Sutherland, an interesting but not quite successful Richards, and, among the sculpture, good examples of Moore and Karin Jonzen.

The Leicester Galleries are also showing prints by Rouault—the twenty-two etchings illustrating Vollard's *Réincarnations du Père Ubu* (published in 1932), sixteen of the seventeen etchings in colour to Suarès' *La Passion* (published in 1939) and eight etchings in colour for the unpublished *Le Cirque* (which were executed not, as the catalogue states, in 1938, but between 1930 and that year). Simultaneously, A. P. Sainsbury, of 16 Bryanston Street, W.1, has available some copies of the artist's principal graphic work—the *Miserere*, the fifty-eight plates for which were completed in 1927 but which has only lately been published.

Rouault is a minor artist who has somehow acquired the reputation of a great contemporary master. This is perhaps due to a prevalent assumption that modern art aspires towards a solemn form of caricature. But the problem faced and resolved by serious contemporary artists has been to reject naturalism while avoiding caricature (and, at the other extreme, decorative design) and their lapses do not reflect their intentions. Rouault has lapsed too often to be placed among the masters. Because he is by nature a subjective and intimate, not a monumental, artist, he is at his best—as in his early expressionistic water-colours—when he makes use of visible brushstrokes, evaded contours and a slapdash design. During the period 1911-39—and these prints form a considerable part of the work of that period—Rouault tried to base his language upon the *monumental* style of mediæval stained glass. Since he lacks the monumental artist's gift for extracting from a form the bare bones of its structure, his simplifications arrive not at a distillation but at an approximation, not at grandeur but at a crudity which cannot be hidden even by the technical sophistication which has produced the astonishing surface textures of the *Miserere*. Since, moreover, he seems unable to confine expression within the form, the form almost invariably appears deformed. Deformation on top of approximation amounts to caricature. Some of the portraits in *Miserere* get beyond this to a rude impressiveness, yet we are too aware of the devices and mannerisms—oh, that stiff and dreary outstretched neck!—which have been used to procure it.

The Hanover Gallery is exhibiting two artists hitherto unknown in England. Miss Buffy Johnson uses what cynical New Yorkers might call the style of the Betty Parsons Gallery as a medium for fantasias in what used to be called delicate pastel shades. Faith alone cannot qualify an artist for the *avant garde*. The water-colours of Edoardo Bargheer, an Italian, are probably the nearest thing to pure Fauvism being done anywhere to-day. His colour is colder and more luminous than that of the Fauves, but it has their unconstrained eloquence, while he shares their hit-or-miss approach to composition. A miss means a not unacceptable confusion. A hit gives the impression that fragments of form and colour have whirled around, knocking into one another, until the moment in which they have discovered a precarious equilibrium; that moment is the picture.

In conclusion, I should like to express my retrospective appreciation of two December exhibitions—Keith Vaughan's at the Lefevre and Pasmore's at the Redfern. Both are following in the steps of Paul Klee, haltingly but intelligently and without plagiarism. Pasmore's *Public Gardens* is the best painting I have seen of any done in this country during 1948.

A. D. B. SYLVESTER

The Easy Way
TO INVEST MONEY

Buy National Savings Certificates the Bank way—it is simple, automatic and without any additional charge to you. You just sign the special Banker's Order form which your Bank Manager can now give you, authorising either a single purchase of National Savings Certificates, or a regular monthly investment. That is all you have to do—and with a stroke of the pen you will have helped to secure your own future, and your country's prosperity.

You can now hold 1,000 10/- units of the new Certificate, and in ten years this £500 will have grown to £650 free of tax. Secure for yourself this profitable gilt-edged investment by calling on your Bank Manager.

SAVE—
The Bank Way

Issued by the National Savings Committee

BARCLAYS BANK
LIMITED.

SIR WILLIAM MACNAMARA GOODENOUGH, BART., Chairman.
WALTER OSBORNE STEVENSON } Deputy Chairmen.
ANTHONY WILLIAM TUKE }
CUTHBERT FITZHERBERT, Vice-Chairman.
General Managers: F. C. ELLERTON, G. F. LEWIS, R. G THORNTON
General Manager (Staff): J. D COWEN.

Statement of Accounts.
31st December, 1948.

LIABILITIES.	£
Current, Deposit and other Accounts	1,274,660,009
Acceptances, Guarantees, Indemnities, etc., for account of Customers	47,781,155
Paid-up Capital	15,858,217
Reserve Fund	13,000,000
ASSETS.	
Cash in Hand and with the Bank of England	106,126,030
Balances with other British Banks and Cheques in course of Collection	52,965,280
Money at Call and Short Notice	78,742,850
Bills Discounted	167,060,403
Treasury Deposit Receipts	302,000,000
Investments	291,816,845
Advances to Customers and other Accounts	286,419,375
Investments in Subsidiaries, at cost, *less* amounts written off :—	
The British Linen Bank—£1,242,295 5s. 0d. Stock	3,726,886
Other Subsidiaries (including fully paid Stock and 500,000 "B" Shares of £5 each, £1 per Share paid up, in Barclays Bank (Dominion, Colonial and Overseas) and 1,000,000 Shares of £1 each, 5s. per Share paid up, in Barclays Bank (France) Limited)	5,554,669
Other Trade Investments, at cost, *less* amounts written off (including 2,638 Shares of £1,000 each, £400 per Share paid up, in Industrial and Commercial Finance Corporation Limited)	1,325,268
Bank Premises and Adjoining Properties (at cost, *less* amounts written off and reserves)	7,780,620
Liability of Customers for Acceptances, Guarantees, Indemnities, etc.	47,781,155

Head Office: 54, LOMBARD ST., LONDON, E.C.3.

RADIO NOTES

BERTRAND RUSSELL'S serial lecture, *Authority and the Individual*, continues on its magisterial way. To praise it would be impertinent; it is enough to say that thousands of ordinary men and women now understand why undergraduates at Cambridge queue up to hear him lecture. But for the radio critic the sweep of Earl Russell's Sunday-evening lectures, twice as long as any other talks broadcast in the Home Service, must prompt the question, Is the B.B.C.'s normal talks policy really adequate to the scope that broadcasting offers for enlightenment and education in the widest sense? Let us admit that the level of talks is high; let us admit that the B.B.C. makes every possible effort to bring men and women of great and special gifts to the microphone. The question still remains, Is this really good enough if the learned and the gifted must then whittle down the findings of their knowledge and intuition to fit the confines of the fifteen-minute talk or, in the Third Programme, the twenty-minute talk? There are, I know, occasional exceptions in the Third Programme: we have heard recordings of Lord Samuel's address to the British Association, which lasted an hour, and Mr. Eliot's lecture on Milton to the British Academy; and only last week Mr. Pritchett was allowed as long as half an hour in the studio to examine the character of the hypocrite, with most fruitful results. But generally it seems that the B.B.C. considers that Home Service listeners are capable of concentrating on an unseen speaker only for fifteen minutes and Third Programme listeners only for twenty, at the end of which, presumably, their attention wanders.

Is this necessarily true? From my own experience of attending formal lectures I know how easy it is to be distracted from full attention by the lecturer himself, by his mannerisms and idiosyncrasies, and also by the audience. I am not suggesting that all talks suffer by being only fifteen or twenty minutes in length; I do not think that Mr. Newby's delightful *The West Wycombe of Baron le Despenser*, for instance, would have been improved by being longer. It is entirely a question of subject. But the fetish of the short talk does mean in effect that we are continually being given introduction to subjects and never allowed to get beyond the introduction. The curiosity is constantly being whetted, but, tantalisingly, the solid fare which would satisfy is withheld.

Following Mrs. Baker's recent feature on a Black Country childhood has come a somewhat similar programme on childhood during the 'twenties in North London, in Miss Eileen Hots' *The Children*. Miss Hots is a newcomer to radio-writing, a discovery of the *First Hearing* series. Her programme was a charming and most faithfully observed rendering of lower middle-class childhood, complete with the annual ecstasy of the Sunday school trip, the menace of the secondary school entrance examination and the sudden realisation of death. Were the voices of the actresses who played the children a little too refined?

The B.B.C. can be relied upon to rise to an occasion with dignity and assurance. The programme commemorating the achievement of Tommy Handley seemed to me perfect in its restraint, and most moving because of that. There was not a false note.

WILLIAM SALTER

THE MOVIES

"Marriage in the Shadow," at the Curzon

The *Daily Express*, from the frightful eminence of its leader column, has been frowning on London film critics. We are as a brotherhood, it seems, unkind; we don't like everything we have to look at, and we say so. Some of us may even at times enjoy saying so. Why not? Because those who have made the films will be discouraged, the *Daily Express* will feel hurt, and the habit of criticising instead of lapping up what we are given may spread dangerously. A newspaper with a circulation of four millions must obviously keep its eye on that sort of thing. Why, asks the *Daily Express*, do we so often praise Continental films and crab the English-speaking product? The answer, that Italy and France make many more good films than we do, is presumably ruled out as irrelevant. The best films showing at the moment in London are *Paisa*, *Farrebique*, *La Femme du Boulanger* and *Le Diable au Corps*: three French and one Italian. A little way below might come *Hamlet;* but then the drop down to the Anglo-American phalanx of *Red River, Rope, Anna Karenina, Johnny Belinda, Scott of the Antarctic*, etc., is considerable. Well, should one minimise that gap, or shouldn't its persistence rather stimulate Anglo-American producers to finer efforts? It seems to me that the *Daily Express*, by asking us in effect to levy a critical tax on "foreign" films and boost the home market, is taking a far gloomier view of our native talents than the most sharp-tongued critic.

Drawn and Quartered (by Richard Winnington, *Saturn Press*, 12*s*. 6*d*.) tells us at once by its title which side the author is on in this matter of amiability, even if we did not know already. These reprints of film reviews, going back to 1943, make no disguise of the fact that they are journalism, and as such they will appeal to film-goers with good memories and critical tastes. Mr. Winnington's merits are that he has a passion for the cinema, that he is usually right, that he draws wittily and in writing makes use of a ready truncheon, and that he has never been afraid to say what he thinks.

Kurt Maetzig's *Marriage in the Shadow*, the new German piece at the Curzon, misses both the stark reality and the morbid passion of *The Murderers Are Among Us*; or rather both actuality and morbidity are there but in feebler, sometimes almost casual forms. The film begins with the early Hitler days, introduces us to a company of actors in Berlin, and then shows the disintegration of life and art under Nazi rule. The leading actress (Ilse Steppat) is a Jewess; she loses her job, marries an Aryan, gives shelter to refugees, is dogged by the Gestapo, and finally, together with her husband, commits suicide. The restraint with which, in general, this theme has been treated makes rather a negative effect; but still our sympathies are held continuously, and from time to time the menacing background comes to life. Hatred begins to curdle, the letter "J" appears on a man's label, the first attacks are made on Jewish shops, we feel the threat of the concentration camp and something of the grinding everyday misery that must overtake a persecuted sect. This is probably a better film about the Jews in Germany than any except the far more striking *Professor Mamlock*. It lacks not so much courage or honesty as living conviction. One feels that, returning patiently and unhappily into the past, it has itself come to belong to the past.

WILLIAM WHITEBAIT

Correspondence

THE GREEK PURGE

SIR,—Mr. Pallis says: (1) that Captain Venetsanopoulos was not discharged from the Gendarmerie for deserting and joining the Resistance; (2) that he was discharged on other, criminal, charges; (3) that he was deported in 1947 as dangerous to public security; (4) that he committed criminal acts punishable under Common Law during the occupation and after liberation; (5) that he is on trial for subversive activities in favour of the "rebels"; and (6) that an attempt has been made to deceive public opinion by presenting him as a hero.

(1) and (2) can be taken together. This is what actually happened. In 1945 the Captain was imprisoned on charges (*a*) of deserting his service during the occupation, on which he was actually court-martialled and acquitted, no doubt because in 1945 there was still some respect for the outward semblance of justice; and (*b*) of "moral responsibil-

"I'm a pioneer
in modern dress!"

Some people don't think that tradition counts for much, but I know better. Take the example of B.O.A.C. . . . Its more than 72,000 miles of world-wide routes to five continents and forty-two countries didn't just happen! There was always a 'first time' for every route. B.O.A.C. has the imagination and the determination to be a leader, it always looks and plans ahead. That's why it's not surprising that B.O.A.C. pioneered so many air routes. Nor is it surprising that B.O.A.C.'s 30-year-old tradition of Speedbird service and experience is reflected by all its personnel!

B.O.A.C. TAKES GOOD CARE OF YOU

FLY BY B·O·A·C

BRITISH OVERSEAS AIRWAYS CORPORATION WITH Q.E.A., S.A.A. & T.E.A.L.

Stow it away –
stow it away!
Come in handy,
some fine day

Don't be a Magpie with scrap! Don't let it settle down to rust away in the work's yard. Get on to your scrap merchant to get it off the premises. For the sake of the whole national effort turn in *everything* redundant—the sooner it's in the scrap merchant's hands the quicker it can be turned into the tools and machines the nation needs.

This appeal is directed to works only. Transport and other facilities may make it possible to widen this later to cover household and other light iron and steel scrap.

Chase THAT SCRAP!

BRITISH IRON & STEEL

ISSUED BY THE BRITISH IRON AND STEEL FEDERATION

ity" for the deaths of various persons (these presumably including the Zois case and two others of which I have full particulars) and on which nothing could be proved against him, so that he was released under the measures for the "de-congestion of prisons" early in 1946. In the late summer of 1947 he went before a Gendarmerie Board, again on counts (*a*) and (*b*), and was discharged from the service. The charge of desertion was still to the fore, as I know because I was trying to collect evidence to help him with his defence on that point. His appeal was heard in December 1947-January 1948 but, before the final verdict appeared, he was taken to the officers' detention camp on Makronisi. Had his discharge been officially confirmed, he would have ranked as a civilian and would not have been eligible for that camp.

(3) To my certain knowledge he was not deported as "dangerous to public security" (i.e. by decision of Security Committee), but was exiled in 1947 "under military regulations" (*i.e.* he was posted to the Island of Serifos, nominally as a serving officer, but actually as an exile under supervision).

(4) I must confess that I have no legal training, but I do not think that "moral responsibility," as interpreted in present-day Greece is punishable under the Common Law of this or any other self-respecting country. Para. 59 of the British Legal Mission's Report (1946) shows that many persons could, in this way, be accused of "moral responsibility" for a single act and the same Report states elsewhere that arrests, made on mere denunciation and without preliminary examination, amounted to at least 50,000. As regards events in Salonika, I do know that the only specific charge made against the Captain, and incidentally not sustained, was that of "ill-treating" a collaborationist Gendarmerie colonel. This man was in danger of being lynched during the Liberation (not the Civil War, when Salonika, with General Bakirjis in command and Captain Venetsanopoulos in charge of the National Civil Guard, is known to have been exceptionally quiet). The Captain went to investigate and the Colonel, Mandouvalas, implored him to stay with him and protect him. Colonel Mandouvalas is, or was until recently, still serving actively with the Gendarmerie.

(5) The actual charge is "subversive propaganda" in the officers' detention camp. I now hold the text of this charge and the depositions of the prosecution witnesses. They show not one shred of evidence which would be admitted in a reputable court and make it quite clear that the Captain's offence is his refusal to sign a recantation and the stiffening effect of this on other officers.

(6) If Captain Venetsanopoulos has been presented to the public as a hero of the Resistance, the responsibility must surely lie with the Greek authorities. All that was said in the press on the Captain's record was what the Greek Government said about him in August 1943, with which, of course, I fully agree.

Bracken Hill, Woking. MARION PASCOE

SIR,—In your issue of November 20, commenting on the trial of Glezos which took place in Athens on October 16, you attributed to the Public Prosecutor, Mr. Machairas, the following statement:

> To form a proper idea of the foul soul of this accused scoundrel, you must go back to May, 1941, when this criminal carried out the base and despicable act of tearing down the German flag from the Acropolis. This he did out of hatred towards the Greek people, and thus gave the Germans the first pretext to attack our innocent people, who condemned his act. This was the first count in the diabolical record of this vile criminal. His head must fall.

I am authorised to state that the Public Prosecutor made no such statement at this trial, which was held in public, and that on the contrary, Glezos' act in tearing down the swastika from the Acropolis was highly praised by the Public Prosecutor and by the Court itself, which added a rider to its verdict recommending clemency "in view of the patriotic act of the accused in lowering the enemy's flag from the sacred rock of the Acropolis during the occupation."

A. A. PALLIS, *Director*

Greek Information Service,
34 Hyde Park Square, W.2.

[Neither at this trial nor any of the long series of political trials in Athens is any shorthand minute kept of the proceedings. The accounts given of the trial in the Greek press are notoriously inadequate and tendentious. In the circumstances, we accept the statement of the Greek Government that our correspondent was mistaken in attributing the words we quoted to the Public Prosecutor, to whom we, therefore, owe an apology. The gravamen of our charge against the political trials which have been carried on by the Greek Government since 1944 remains, of course, entirely unaffected. They provide a legal cloak for a vindictive purge. We are glad to hear that the court requested that the sentence of death on Glezos should be commuted to mere life imprisonment because he hauled down a German flag. Acts of patriotism during the German occupation are to-day apt to be regarded by the courts as *prima facie* evidence of Communist sympathies.—ED., *N. S. & N.*]

GERMAN REVIVAL

SIR,—Your editorial note on "The Revival of Germany" invites some comments.

(1) "Both workers and their employers" you say "are going slow in dismantling war plants, pleading, significantly enough, that they will be treated as traitors by future German generations if they dispossess Germany of her war industry." Two examples of resistance to dismantling have recently been in the news. First, the Bochumer Verein. I have only press reports to go on; but according to the *Daily Telegraph* correspondent "the workers have already co-operated in the dismantling of those parts of the plant which were classified as war factories. They refuse to dismantle the remaining workshops, which manufacture railway lines and rolling stock and half of Western Germany's production of motor-car chassis." This appears to be confirmed by the Regional Commissioner of North Rhine Westphalia, quoted in the *Manchester Guardian*. Speaking specifically of the Bochumer Verein, "The plan," he said, "to make available for reparations certain industrial plants which have been declared surplus to the permitted level of industry is a plan which has been agreed by all occupying Powers." Reparations, level of industry—but nothing about war plant.

Second, Eckernfoerde. There are about a million and a quarter expellees in Schleswig-Holstein—almost doubling the pre-war population. It had been planned to use the extensive surface buildings at Eckernfoerde for light industries, in an effort to cope with this surplus. The German Social-democrats and trade unionists have wholeheartedly supported the destruction of the military installations, particularly those underground. What they deny is that demilitarisation cannot be accomplished without breaching the sea-walls, and so making the whole place, within a few years, a derelict fishing village. I do not know whether they are right, as I am ignorant of engineering and the technique of blowing-up; but their view is supported by an exceedingly experienced British engineer, as well as by a former Control Commission official of very high rank who knows every square inch of Eckernfoerde intimately. Allow me to quote a letter from the Social-democrats of Schleswig-Holstein to our Labour Party. "Within the policy of disarmament, to which we agree wholeheartedly, former ammunition plants, naval shipyards, torpedo manufacturing, assembling, and testing plants . . . were stripped of all their machinery, and purely military constructions were blasted. What then remained, *i.e.* the nude and empty workshops and administration buildings, is the most valuable asset for our policy of providing jobs for the expellees . .

Take the
ALPINE SUN
indoors!

High in the Swiss mountains the cool actinic Alpine sunshine revitalizes tired bodies and energizes weary minds. Even invalids return tanned and invigorated.

The Hanovia Sunlamp (Model P.L. IV) provides Alpine sunshine indoors just when you need it. In many states of illness, convalescence, debility and sun starvation, regular sunbaths with this lamp restore and maintain health. Ask your doctor; he knows Hanovia lamps, and you will need his Certificate when you order. Price £21. Send for free booklet and address of nearest dealer.

HANOVIA SUNLAMP
(MODEL P.L.IV)

HANOVIA LTD
SLOUGH
London Showrooms:
3 Victoria St., S.W.1
Tel: WHI 3627

STOP THAT COLD WITH
VAPEX

BREATHE . . . Put a Vapex Inhalant. drop on your handkerchief each morning. A drop on your pillow at night gives protection and comfort while you sleep.

BREATHE . . . The new Vapex Inhaler is convenient, unobtrusive and effective for outdoor use. Simply pull off the cap. Easily re-charged from Standard Vapex bottle.

RUB IN . . . Vapex-Volatol for Chest Colds. A stimulating ointment-liniment—warming, soothing, penetrating. Non-greasy does not stain skin or clothing. Ideal for children's colds.

V239

Breathe the vapour ▲1 from your handkerchief-or ▲2 from the Vapex Inhaler—and ▲3 rub your chest with
VAPEX - VOLATOL

Of all Chemists
Vapex 2/6 Inhaler 1/3 Vapex-Volatol 1/9

THOMAS KERFOOT & CO. LTD. ENGLAND.

B.Sc. ECON.
LONDON UNIVERSITY

● **The B.Sc. Econ. Degree** of the University of London may advantageously be taken by men or women seeking or holding government or municipal posts, or executive appointments in commerce or industry.

● **Study for the Degree,** which may be taken without residence at the University or attendance at lectures, covers a course of wide and interesting reading. Candidates are required to pass, after Matriculation, two examinations, the Intermediate and the Final. U.C.C., founded 1887, provides tuition by post. The College is an Educational Trust, not conducted primarily as a profit-making concern. Highly qualified *specialist* Tutors. Moderate fees; instalments if desired.

● **Write for free Prospectus** giving particulars of U.C.C. Courses for London Univ. and other exams. to the Registrar,

University Correspondence College
70 Burlington House, Cambridge

In view of this situation and of the fateful misinformations delivered so far to the British Government in questions which are vital for us, the labour of Schleswig-Holstein, we can see only one way—direct labour to labour contacts. We beg you to send a parliamentary investigation committee and to see that all further blastings be stopped until this committee has made its investigations on the spot." There was a time when international Socialists would have regarded it as the most elementary of duties to accede to such a request.

(2) "The League for German Revival and the National Democratic Party are now openly standing as champions of a physically strong and united Germany and putting forward revisionist demands on all frontiers, including Alsace-Lorraine." Is there a country in the world in which such parties would not have arisen three or four years after a war which had resulted in the loss of so much territory? They are still, I understand, numerically insignificant; but unfair treatment of Germany might well drive millions into their hands. And, reactionaries apart, are we so sure that, if ordinary decent Englishmen were in the Germans' shoes, they would not, at contemplation of the lost provinces, feel a trifle irredentist? I have constantly urged any Germans I might influence to accept this loss of territory as a contribution to European peace: but I am bound to ask myself whether the wholesale Allied annexations were any more virtuous than the refusal of some Germans to accept them as permanent. And the thing goes on. It is reported to-day that Six-Power agreement has been reached on "rectifications" of the Western German frontier. To say nothing of Belgium and Luxembourg, the Netherlands claim appears originally to have included a large area around Emlichheim-Neuenhaus, containing oilfields, two long frontier strips from Aachen to Emmerich and from Nordhorn to the Ems estuary, and the estuary itself with the island of Borkum, the annexation of which would place Emden in Dutch control.

You state that "with this hope of recovered strength, nationalism is already displaying contempt for all the former Allies." While we are all no doubt apt to speak of "patriotism" in our own case but of "nationalism" in the case of others and particularly of Germans, it would not be surprising if dangerous emotions were on the increase in Germany to-day. Some of us pointed out years ago that this would be the inevitable result of our policy. The tearing away of the Eastern provinces; the hordes of expellees; the semi-starvation; an original "level of industry" which would have condemned an industrious people to permanent misery; the blowings-up; the dismantlings—the memory of such things was bound to lead, once starvation was at an end and recovery had begun, to a new phase of self-assertion. But there is something else that was not so inevitable—and that is the wise and moderate statesmanship, the European vision, displayed in speech after speech these last few weeks by men such as Arnold, Boeckler and Carlo Schmidt. They are fighting, of course, for a free and equal Germany—and we ought to despise them if they were not—but for a free and equal Germany as an unaggressive partner in a common European enterprise. An end to the dismantling of peace plant which is against nature, and that integration of their country in a larger European unit which must rob them of all power of aggression—this is what they ask; and with the second part of this policy, at least, more and more Frenchmen are in agreement. Would it not be wiser, therefore, to talk a little less largely about reviving German nationalism, and to pursue instead, in company with those both in France and in Germany who are our real allies, a policy that will remove its causes?

VICTOR GOLLANCZ

14 Henrietta Street, W.C.2.

THE LYSENKO CONTROVERSY

SIR,—It is to the obvious interest of the Soviet regime and its friends to release a fog over the Lysenko controversy. Professor Waddington may claim to have been of some help in this direction. May I attempt to remove the vapour from one of his sentences? "The Russians," he says, "of course, state categorically that the acceptance by authors such as Darlington and Fisher of the rumours of torture and death are (*sic*) malicious calumnies." Would not anyone reading this sentence suppose that the Soviet Government had officially stated that certain rumours, as affecting certain of the victims, were untrue? Yet that is precisely what the Soviet Government has declined to do. Sir Henry Dale pointed out in his letter of resignation to the Soviet Academy (printed in full in *Discovery*, January, 1949) that the Academy never replied when the Royal Society asked again and again to be told the time and place of death of Vavilov, the President of the Lenin Academy of Agricultural Sciences, who was elected a Foreign Member of The Royal Society in 1942. Nor has there been any denial of the repeated allegation that other leading scientists have been put to death.

Again, would anyone reading Professor Waddington's sentence suppose that the *rumours* with regard to Vavilov's death were set on foot by the Soviet Government itself? Yet that is just what happened.

It was in June, 1945, that the Soviet Government organised a jubilee to celebrate the 220th anniversary of its Academy of Sciences. In the course of the entertainment some of the guests inquired why N. I. Vavilov, brother of the present President and one of the principal members of the Academy, was missing. They were told by Academicians that he had been shot during the war while trying to escape from Russia. Now, even on the most convivial occasions, Soviet Academicians are careful not to make unofficial allegations to foreigners about their government's actions. This statement was therefore obviously the official rumour *inside* Russia. It shocked some of the more sensitive foreign guests. It was for this reason, I suggest, that another "rumour" a little nearer the truth was later set on foot. It was that Vavilov had died at Magadan during the war "while breeding frost-resistant plants." This is now the official rumour for dissemination *outside* Russia.

Since 1945, the circumstances of Vavilov's end have gradually become known outside the Soviet Union—without the help of the Soviet Government. They have been described three times. Dobzhansky (*Heredity*, August, 1947) has pointed out that Magadan in North-East Siberia bears a sinister reputation on account of "its deadly climate and even worse because it was built and operated by forced labour." So much for breeding frost-resistant plants.

In my article (*Nineteenth Century*, September, 1947) I pointed out the complicated circumstances of Vavilov's arrest, condemnation to death, and removal to Saratov. I also pointed out that the Soviet Government had put to death eight other leading geneticists. And in articles in the *Saturday Review of Literature* and the *Atomic Scientists' Bulletin* of last December, Professor H. J. Muller has described the personal and political background of the persecution of genetics in Soviet Russia. As Senior Geneticist of the Institute of Genetics of the Academy of Sciences in Leningrad and later in Moscow (from September, 1933, to March, 1937) Muller was in the best position to watch the processes leading to the suppression of genetics. Muller concludes that while Agol was "done away with" and Vavilov "done to death" . . . "it is not possible to know the real causes of death of such distinguished scientists in this field as Karpechenko, Koltzoff, Serebrovsky and Levitsky."

Why does not the Soviet Government explain officially that all these men are alive and well? Or that they have died natural deaths? Or that they were all spies and traitors—a frequent circumstance? Communists, and friends of the regime outside Russia, would be greatly relieved. The load of shame would be lifted off their shoulders. I suggest that the Soviet Government has not done so, and will not do so, because of the effect such a statement would have *inside* Russia. It would seem a sign of weakness. The disappearance or killing of some

The Future of Private Enterprise?

PARTNERSHIP
FOR ALL

BY

JOHN SPEDAN LEWIS

Founder of
THE JOHN LEWIS PARTNERSHIP

a 34-year old experiment in
industrial democracy

12/6 net Demy 8vo 536 pp
Kerr-Cros London

WRITE YOUR NOTES AT 120 W.P.M. WITH

SPEEDWORDS

the new international system of note taking

You can write the numeral "3" five times as quickly as the word *three*. The Frenchman writes 3 five times as quickly as *trois*; the German, Dutch, Spanish and Portuguese write it four times as quickly as *drei*, *drie*, or *tres*.

The numerals 1, 2, 3, 4, etc., provide an international script-language for expressing quantities. Their brevity makes it possible to write, for instance, "three hundred and thirty three" at shorthand speed by using the internationally understood 333.

Apply a similar principle to *all* ideas instead of merely to quantities and the outcome is a high-speed script which makes international correspondence practicable. Dutton Speedwords IS such an invention. It requires the memorisation of only 493 brief root-words such as *h—have; ma—make; lo—long; am—love; gu—good;* plus simple rules for forming compounds. The abbreviating rules are so powerful that ordinary running matter averages only a fraction over two letters per word and can be written or typed at 120 words per minute.

This new invention has been commended by G. Bernard Shaw and Prof. Hogben, F.R.S. Apart from its interesting international aspect it is already being widely used by business executives and professional men and women for quick notes. The 8-lesson postal course can be completed in 20 hours of study. The time thus spent is soon repaid and note-taking speed increases from the first lesson.

You are invited to send 2½d. stamp for specimen lesson and full details without obligation.

DUTTON SPEEDWORDS

Dept HN6, 92-3, Great Russell St., London, W.C.1.

THE LITTLE THAT
MATTERS SO MUCH

The test of aspirin is its purity. Just because of its purity Howards Aspirin costs a little more.

HOWARDS
ASPIRIN

It is not the cheapest—it is the best

Made by
HOWARDS OF ILFORD
Established 1797

individuals always has a general, as well as a particular, value for a government of this kind. It is to terrorise those who remain. Unless the government exercised, and was believed to exercise, a power of life and death for scientific, as well as for other, heresy, scientists would begin to presume on their position. They would become cheeky. And the threats of liquidation continually made against geneticists like Levit, Vavilov, and Zhebrak by the Moscow press in 1936, 1939 and 1947 and by Lysenko himself in his final triumph in 1948, would have no meaning and no effect. In fact, as Muller puts it, "from 1936, Soviet geneticists of all ranks lived a life of terror." And that terror is now revealed by the whole Academy.

On my interpretation therefore (and I should like to hear of any other) Professor Waddington's statement means simply this: that to accept *outside* Russia rumours that are official *inside* Russia is a malicious calumny. In other words, no one who did such a thing would ever be invited again.

This is one of many questions of detail which Professor Waddington has clouded over. But on the general issue at least we might expect him for one moment to reveal a glimpse of reality. Nothing of the sort: "the administrative changes" (so he styles them) "in scientific institutes in the U.S.S.R. can be defended in terms of the Soviet conception of society." But it is precisely the Soviet conception of society which is on trial. And one must be a very great friend of the Soviet regime not to realise that.

C. D. Darlington

John Innes Horticultural Institution, S.W.19.

Sir,—Dr. Auerbach is annoyed at the suggestion that a grain of truth thrown by Lysenko and his co-workers may bring the walls of genetics tumbling down. I did not suggest this—but it would depend on the grain. A single grain of truth may be completely indigestible to a false theory, and those who identify themselves with the theory may suffer untold agonies. I was present at one of Einstein's earliest lectures on relativity, and watched eminent scientists stamp out in incoherent rage at the thought of Space-Time. I am no geneticist. I can claim only to have had to listen to many friends who are, and for many years to have endured McBride as a Lamarckian colleague; but I have lived through the scientific controversies that have surrounded the ether, gravitation, space-time and relativity, wave-particles, field theories and quantum theory.

I may well be wrong, but (as I understand the position) we are here involved with a chromosome—soma field theory. Lysenko does not deny chromosomes, which are one end of the duality. He has repeated this many times. He also denies that he is a Lamarckian. What he seems to assert is that an effective method of changing the chromosome-soma unity can be organised from the soma end, and *that he has developed a controlled technique for achieving this.* The question is not whether genetics is true or false, unless genetics asserts more than I conceive it does, but whether he has in fact developed such a technique. I cannot judge; and it does not look as if there is sufficient evidence available outside the U.S.S.R. to decide. All I say is that finally either Lysenko or those who deny his contention will have to recant.

Of Lysenko's methods of controversy *in the U.S.S.R.* I have nothing to say, except to point out that the difficulty of getting translations *outside* that country is not irrelevant. Lysenko's picture of geneticists is necessarily coloured by the type he has to meet in the U.S.S.R. and the views they express. It is important to add that the plain speaking that came from his opponents in the U.S.S.R. is quite inconsistent with the stories that have been broadcast in this country with regard to the treatment of Vavilov and other geneticists, and the meaning attached here to the word "dismissal." There appears to be no question of geneticists losing their jobs and becoming unemployed; rather that the determination of practical policy cannot obviously be left in the hands of people who do not agree with the grounds on which it is pursued. A purge is not uncommon in this country on rather similar grounds.

Hyman Levy

Imperial College of Science,
London, S.W.7.

CRUEL SPORTS

Sir,—No one, I am sure, would wish to disparage the work of the R.S.P.C.A. or to criticise the measures which it is now promoting, but surely Mr. Moss has missed the point of Critic's remarks. As I understood him, Critic was expressing surprise that Britain, having done so much to protect domestic animals, should not extend to wild animals that protection from cruelty for which the League Against Cruel Sports and the National Society for Abolition of Cruel Sports are now campaigning.

Mr. Moss, however, concentrates on the subjects covered by the Bills which his Society hopes that Members will introduce. He does not, for example, mention that it has in the past favoured legislation against coursing and the hunting of carted stags. (Its attitude to other forms of hunting has always been less well-defined.) Now that Private Members' Bills are again possible, one would have hoped that the R.S.P.C.A. would have taken the opportunity of promoting legislation to end at least these two barbaric practices. I appreciate that the Society might well find itself in a difficult position in advocating the abolition of all blood sports, but its policy towards these two forms of hunting has been so definite that its present discreet inactivity is disappointing

Most reasonable people will share Critic's views. There seems no real reason why one man should be imprisoned for setting two dogs on a cat, whereas 200 people can set dogs on a hare and pull it to pieces with impunity, or why we get indignant at some ways of killing cows, but complacently allow stags to be worried by dogs, impaled on fences, killed by shotguns or harried over cliffs.

Damage by pests must clearly be prevented, but it must be done efficiently and as humanely as possible. If a fox cannot be destroyed painlessly, and cruelty is inevitable, that cruelty should not be made the occasion for sport and for a social gathering. A pest should be destroyed by the Ministry of Agriculture quickly and for sound reasons. To-day it is killed only after a long chase, and therefore slowly, so that the sportsmen may enjoy as much sport as possible. Killing for fun is a practice which should not commend itself to civilised men and women. Not even if they *are* members of the R.S.P.C.A. and *are* fond of dogs and horses and kind to cats.

Anthony Greenwood

House of Commons.

ATOMIC WARFARE

Sir,—An error crept into my answer to Mr. Asher Lee's letter published last week. The caption to the table should have been "Numbers of Aircraft," and there should have been a second table as follows:

Structure Weight (Million Pounds)

	1942	1944
Germany	92	174
U.K.	133	208

May I also point out that the printer did my handwriting less than justice? My argument was that the average *loss*, not *ton*, rate of American day and British night bombers was similar during the last years of the war; and I credited close formations with greater *defensive* not *definite* fire power.

P. M. Blackett

THE ABBEY THEATRE

Sir,—The Directors of the Abbey Theatre have commissioned me to compile a history of our Theatre. I shall be very grateful for data dealing with the productions of the Irish Theatre from May, 1899, to November, 1904, in Dublin and elsewhere. Contributions—news cuttings, personal reminiscences and the like—would be copied and returned.

Abbey Theatre, Dublin. Lennox Robinson

JANUARY 24 TO
FEBRUARY 19
Sale of
BOOKS
AT REDUCED
PRICES
newly withdrawn from
the Library
*Call or
write for catalogue*
THE TIMES
BOOK CLUB
BOOK SHOP
THE TIMES BOOK CLUB
42 Wigmore Street, London, W.1
TBW

The RIMINGTON JEWEL
will bring new life to
GRAMOPHONE REPRODUCTION

Lightweight for new miniature pick-up.

Straight for Crystal pick-up only.

There is a trailer type of jewel, at the same price, for heavier types of pick-up.

★ Reproduces the maximum recorded frequency range.
★ Wear on records is negligible, the jewel is scientifically designed to follow the groove of the record lightly and smoothly.
★ Preserves the higher frequencies delicately imprinted in the record, so easily destroyed, and reproduces them!
★ Jewel well set and angle correct.
★ Contained in plastic box well packed and mounted.
★ LIFE. It is not possible to state categorically the life of a jewel point, but in the interest of quality it is advisable to replace the jewel after 1000 playings—it is a matter of personal discretion.
★ The Rimington Jewel has had exhaustive tests by Messrs. W. R. Prior Ltd., microscope manufacturers, of Bishops Stortford, who have stated that the needles are free from blemish and perfect in detail.
★ The Rimington Jewel needle reveals new beauties in your records which you have heretofore unsuspected.

PRICE—Most reasonable. The Rimington Jewel is the finest sapphire on the market and it retails at only 9/9.

RIMINGTONS
RIMINGTON, VAN WYCK LTD., 42-43 Cranbourn St., London, W.C.2 *Gerrard* 1171
RIMINGTON, VAN WYCK (Mail Order) LTD., 28a Devonshire St., Marylebone, London, W.1 *Welbeck* 4695

MUSIC
IN OUR TIME
Adolfo Salazar

*Trends in Music
Since the Romantic Era*
Demy 8vo 15s
★ *A prospectus will gladly be sent on application to 8 Bury Place, London, W.C.1*
THE BODLEY HEAD

BOOKS IN GENERAL

A SOCIAL device which anthropologists have reported from many parts of the world is the bachelor's hall or village dormitory in which the young males—and, on occasion, the young of both sexes—live a more or less independent life between childhood and marriage. Although the existence of such a device is so widespread as to suggest both independent invention and a valuable social function, we have, up to now, had only the sketchiest information on what actually took place inside these institutions. In many areas the proceedings are sacred secrets; even when they are not, the natives suspect outside disapproval and either refuse to talk or tell lies. This book,* which describes in full and fascinating detail the life of the *ghotul*, or village dormitories, of an aboriginal Indian tribe, consequently fills a most important gap not only in technical anthropology but in our knowledge of the varieties of human behaviour. Mr. Elwin was first met with the lies and evasions which have baffled earlier anthropologists, but he was able, by a fortunate combination of circumstances, to over-ride them. He had an official position, and so was able to give the natives real and concrete help; he loved and admired the Muria very much and "the Muria cannot resist affection"; and Mrs. Elwin is a Gond, a member of a neighbouring tribe, accepted as a friend and equal by the Muria girls.

The Muria constitute an aboriginal tribe—one of several—some 100,000 strong, inhabiting Bastar State in the centre of India. They combine primitive agriculture (by burning) with considerable reliance on hunting with bow and arrow and the gathering of wild food. They are technologically very primitive. They belong to patrilineal clans and maintain totemic observances. Although somewhat influenced by Hinduism, they possess their own pantheon and religious ritual, in which trance possession plays a major role. They have moved their habitat considerably within living memory.

These movements of habitat have profoundly transformed the current practices of the *ghotul*. Muria villages were originally inhabited entirely by members of one clan; since clan incest is forbidden, the *ghotul* had to be simili-sexual (one hesitates to write "homosexual" without adequate evidence, though the terms could properly be used for similar institutions in New Guinea), as is still the case with the neighbouring tribe, the Hill Maria. With the break-up of the localised clans, sexual partners became available in their own village; and the *ghotul* which Mr. Elwin describes are, in every sense of the word, heterosexual.

Children join the *ghotul* when they have achieved full physical independence and remain members until their marriage. In the great majority of cases marriages are arranged by the parents and conform to the socially approved cross-cousin marriage type; marriage apparently takes place in the late teens. During the day children work with their parents, and go to the *ghotul* after their evening meal; in some villages they sleep in them every night, in others on only certain days of the week.

The *ghotul* are theocratically sanctioned, and the members have certain ritual duties to perform, either alone or as most important components of such ceremonies as marriages and funerals. The native arts—music, singing, dancing, wood-carving—are practised by the members of the *ghotul* and apparently only by them. There are a number of officers, with various duties of supervision and instruction, with parallel titles in each *ghotul*; the officers are nominated on the basis of character from the available members.

The small children spend a period of "fagging" for their elders, learning habits of industry, co-operation and equality and, in the case of little girls, techniques of massage; they are subsequently admitted to the rights and duties of full membership, including heterosexual intercourse with other members. These rights are granted well before puberty.

The Muria *ghotul* fall into two contradictory patterns of sexual behaviour; in what Mr. Elwin considers the older, and shows to be the less frequent type, sexual fidelity is enjoined, so that the partnerships are an analogue of marriage; in the more common type sexual possessiveness is forbidden, and members are fined if they sleep with the same partner more than three nights running. In the latter, sleeping partners for the night are often assigned by one of the officials, though on occasion personal preference may circumvent such arrangements. Although there are periods of ritually enforced abstinence, all young Muria have frequent, and usually very varied, intercourse all through their later childhood and adolescence, though for girls it may not be complete before the menarche. The Muria believe that the sexual desire of women is greater than that of men; in myth and in practice alike it is regularly the women or girls who take the initiative. The girls massage the boys nightly, often in a directly provocative manner.

Mr. Elwin reports and validates statistically (he had 2,000 questionnaires filled) two socially extremely important facts: despite the frequency of pre-marital intercourse, there are very few illegitimate births; and marriages, subsequent to this early experimentation, are remarkably happy and stable, with very few divorces and very little adultery (an interesting sidelight is that divorces are more than four times as frequent in "irregular" marriages of childhood sweethearts as in arranged marriages). These findings are congruent with those of other anthropologists who have studied tribes with free pre-marital sexuality—e.g., Malinowski on the Trobrianders, Mead on the Samoans, myself on the Lepchas. Mr. Elwin decides—and I agree with him—that the relative absence of early pregnancies is a physiological phenomenon, that there is a period of varying length (the Muria say three years) between the menarche and complete fertility, during which intercourse will almost always be sterile.

Professor M. F. Ashley-Montagu has collected together all the data for this period of "adolescent sterility," and the evidence appears conclusive. For most human females there is a period of between two and eight years during which intercourse will almost always be sterile. Western societies to-day completely ignore this physiological "safe period"; indeed with very few exceptions it is a criminal offence for a girl to have intercourse during these years. All societies exploit some of the human psychological and physiological potentialities and ignore others; often they will deny the potentialities they ignore. Another aspect which we ignore is the potentiality for trance states; where trances are socially valued, a considerable portion of any population seems to develop the capacity.

The social and legal raising of the nubile age for women in Western societies is a comparatively recent phenomenon, and would seem to be connected with the increasingly complex technology of our civilisation, which demands post-adolescent education, and consequently the postponement of social maturity, from an increasing number of our citizens. It would seem that part of the price we have to pay for this is growing instability in the later contracted marriages. For the Muria, as for the other tribes I have mentioned, "chastity begins with marriage." There is not yet enough data from enough societies to state the reason for this with any certainty; a reasonable hypothesis would appear to be that with sufficiently varied experience in adolescence, the attraction of the sexually unknown is lowered to the extent that the resistance of temptation is easy.

The picture which Mr. Elwin paints of *ghotul* life is idyllic and lyrical: "Là, tout n'est qu'ordre et beauté, luxe, calme et volupté"; enchanted himself, Mr. Elwin passionately defends the *ghotul* against all imagined and imaginable critics. Mr. Elwin is unique (or nearly so) among anthropologists for being overtly partisan, in favour of the people he is studying, and for his very great aesthetic sensibility. He makes consistent and valid use of the poetry and songs, the plastic art and the dances of the people he studies. He uses his ear much more than his eye; texts and report bulk large, observation plays little part.

It is perhaps unfair to criticise a book so full of valuable data for its omissions. But it would undoubtedly be much easier to judge the claims made for the social value of the *ghotul* if we had been given adequate data on the character, upbringing and behaviour of the children before they became members, and of the relationship between parents and children.

The Muria adults advance as the reason for the *ghotul* the embarrassment they would feel if older children were to witness parental intercourse; and, with rather surprising naivety, Mr. Elwin takes this rationalisation seriously, and spends a number of pages discussing it. From internal evidence Mr. Elwin would appear to have little natural aptitude for, and no training in, systematic psychology; and the quaint list of authorities he quotes in his footnotes can most charitably be explained by the difficulty of getting modern books in the remote areas where Mr. Elwin has spent so many years. Nevertheless, it is surprising that anyone should misunderstand Freud so completely as to discuss the *ghotul* as a device for avoiding the "primal scene," when the evidence shows that the child spends its first five or six years in the same room as its parents.

From the psychological point of view, one of the chief functions of the *ghotul* is to separate to a very great extent the sexual life of succeeding generations. Most primitive societies appear to have devices for averting the probably disruptive results of sexual rivalry between older and younger, stronger and weaker men. The more common is probably the wide extension of incest taboos; but age-grades, of which the *ghotul* is a specific example, often fulfil this function, too. The Old Man of the Tribe who takes all the women available—so dear to the imagination of armchair anthropologists and psychologists—would seem to be the hybrid product of day-dreams and some observations on some of the great apes. The social wisdom of all surviving societies has developed devices for avoiding such rivalries.

The *ghotul* is a most successful social device, apparently, for freeing the sexual life of the Muria from strain and conflicts; but this serenity and contentment is not without its social price. For the Muria, the peak of life is the second decade; not only the greatest pleasure and freedom are enjoyed during those years, but also the practice of all the tribe's arts are confined to people in that age grade. Technologically, the Muria have developed very little; and it seems probable that there may be more than coincidental relationship between their backwardness and their very strong accent on youth. In his passionate advocacy, Mr. Elwin suggests that the modern world is well lost in exchange for such ease and happiness; but this is a value judgment, divorced from any choices open to us.

Psychologically, too, the *ghotul* seems to create, as well as solve, problems for some of the Muria. Mr. Elwin mentions casually the existence of bachelors of thirty or forty — a very rare phenomenon in tribes at this stage of development—still members of the *ghotul* and still wearing the characteristic clothes of the adolescent. For some men, apparently, the pleasures of youth are too great for them to put them by when they come to maturity; and indeed *ghotul* life, as described by Mr. Elwin, appears so entrancing that one wonders why there are not more such Peter Pans, and what common inducements are found to make people consent to marry.

This book is sumptuously illustrated with 150 photographic plates which do much to explain Mr. Elwin's enchantment, and nearly as many figures in the text. Like many books printed in India, the paper is over-thin, so that the print on the back of the page is often visible; but this is the only blemish on a book which, in every other way, is a most desirable possession.

GEOFFREY GORER

---

* *The Muria and Their Ghotul.* By VERRIER ELWIN. *Oxford University Press.* 42s.

"THE BOLD EYES OF THE MADMAN"

The Strange Life of August Strindberg. By ELIZABETH SPRIGGE. *Hamish Hamilton.* 15s.

August Strindberg was born on January 22nd, 1849. It is disappointing that the centenary should have brought forth in England no more adequate memorial than Miss Sprigge's biography. *Faute de mieux,* it has its value, but what one had hoped for, what is conspicuously wanting, is a considered attempt to evaluate Strindberg's work and the nature of his genius. We need to relate his contribution to nineteenth-century literature, to that of his great contemporaries, in particular Nietszche (". . . my spirit life," he wrote, "has received in its uterus a tremendous outpouring of seed from Friedrich Nietszche, so that I feel as full as a pregnant bitch. He was my husband"), Ibsen ("the Norwegian blue-stocking") and Dostoevsky. What Miss Sprigge has given us is a wholly uncritical biography. She is a learned and enthusiastic Strindbergian who has had access to material which has only recently been made public in Sweden. Yet for all her learning her book is scarcely satisfactory as biography. "Strindberg," she writes in her preface, "chose the form of novels for his autobiographies, and so, although this book is not fiction, I have told his life as a story." This is precisely how one does not want a biography told. Writing her book as though it were a novel, without humour or irony (and surely the subject demands one or the other), Miss Sprigge identifies himself entirely with her hero; we are never allowed to see him from any point of view other than his own; his behaviour, the course of his life, the disastrous marriages to those ghastly intense young women—it is doubtful whether a more embarrassing book than Freda Strindberg's *Marriage with Genius* has ever been published—are submitted to no kind of judgment; most serious of all, there is no examination of Strindberg's work; all we are given is a perfunctory account of his influence on later dramatists and the information that Mr. Sean O'Casey considers him greater than either Ibsen or Barrie. Imagine the life of Rimbaud written without reference to his poetry. What significance could it have? No more than that of any other vicious youth who came to a deservedly bad end. Similarly, the reader who comes to *The Strange Life of August Strindberg* without some knowledge of Strindberg's plays and fiction will certainly find it strange enough, this story of a Swedish polyglot paranoiac who believed he could kill his enemies at a distance by will-power, knocked himself up a transcendental religious system out of the writings of Nietszche, Swedenborg, Maeterlinck and the Indian mystics, and died in the opinion that he had succeeded in making gold. A biography of Strindberg is valuable only if it throws light on his writing; otherwise it is merely material for the alienist.

Miss Sprigge takes the supreme excellence of Strindberg's work for granted. It seems to me difficult for the Englishman who does not read Swedish to do this. His knowledge will almost certainly consist of not more than half a dozen plays out of all Strindberg's enormous output of plays, novels and short stories, more than eighty in all. Of the half-dozen he knows, some (*The Father* and *Miss Julie* are the obvious instances) will strike him as powerful in the extreme but also, compared with the work of Strindberg's great contemporaries in the theatre, Ibsen and Chehov, as the products of an unbalanced mind. The rest, *Easter, The Spook Sonata, The Road to Damascus,* he will probably find marred by whimsy and ultimately baffling despite many incidental beauties. Yet Strindberg remains; he continues to whet the curiosity; he challenges the attention. Miss Sprigge records that Ibsen hung a portrait of Strindberg over his desk, declaring he could not write a word without "the bold eyes of the madman" staring down at him. The bold eyes of the mad man: therein lies the fascination of Strindberg. He represents at its extreme one peculiarly modern type of artist, the romantic of deranged sensibilities whose art is a private universe. The bold eyes stare; but they stare inwards. Hence the bewilderment we feel in the presence of *Easter* or *A Dream Play.* It isn't so much that the symbolism is difficult as that it is purely personal to the author; it can be explained only in terms of his private associations. And it is here that Miss Sprigge's book has value. The key to his symbolic plays is his life. His eighty or so works form a continuous autobiography, and, as the events of his life show, it is scarcely possible to make a distinction between the naturalistic plays like *The Father* and what for want of a better word must be called the symbolic plays, though his writing contains little real symbolism, in the sense in which the word is normally used in criticism. For his life had always the intense hallucinatory quality of a dream. Things happened to him waking which normally happen to a man only in his sleep; Miss Sprigge uses the admirable expression "materialised nightmare" of the following instance:

> Through a gypsy woman, whose son was employed there, they (the Strindbergs) heard of cheap rooms in an old castle at Holte not far from Copenhagen, and had settled down in the greatest filth and discomfort with a mad Countess who played a hurdy-gurdy, the gypsy steward who practised hypnotism, his fifteen-year-old sister who made advances to Strindberg and then accused him of seducing her, and a pack of untrained dogs.

All the properties of a Strindberg play. Once the facts of his life are known, detailed as Miss Sprigge details them, the meaning of even the most baffling plays become perfectly clear.

This explains, I think, why Strindberg's work (with the possible exception of the *Gustavus Vasa* cycle, where his material, the history of the Swedish Reformation, forced a measure of impersonality upon him), is ultimately unsatisfying and certainly far below that of his great European contemporaries. Our understanding of Dostoevsky's novels is not really heightened by knowing that he was once sentenced to death and reprieved only while facing the firing squad; but without some knowledge of the details of Stringberg's courtship of and marriage to Harriet Bose we shall get from *A Dream Play* only a blurred impression of savage indignation, hysterical self-pity and half-baked theosophy. Indeed, perhaps the dominant effect one receives from his work, naturalistic or symbolic, is of megalomaniac self-pity, which is none the less repellant because it is expressed by a literary genius who was also a master of the theatre. His plays illuminate his own situation; they do not illuminate the human situation as a whole.

WALTER ALLEN

A TRAGIC HATE

President Roosevelt and the Coming of War. By CHARLES A. BEARD. *Oxford University Press.* 27s. 6d.

Everyone who was a friend of the late Professor Beard will regret profoundly that he wrote this book. An historian of exceptional eminence, a man of courage and magnanimity, genuinely progressive in almost all realms of thought, eager, vivid, and stimulating, he was a remarkable teacher and a man whom to know was to respect. This is the second of two books in which he makes an angry, even vindictive, attack on the foreign policy of Franklin Roosevelt. With passionate fury, he takes his stand with all the worst elements in American isolationism. This volume is essentially a charge that President Roosevelt consciously and of set purpose deceived the American people. His argument may be summarised by saying that Beard was convinced that Roosevelt won his third election, in 1940, by pledging his word to the electorate that he would keep the United States out of the war even while he was deliberately planning to enter it; and, even further, that to secure the maximum possible unity of the American people, he tricked Japan into that combination of folly and shame at Pearl Harbour so that the entrance of the United States did not seem—as in fact Beard thought it was—the organised effort of an aggressor, but the natural decision to defend itself from a threat which it dare not neglect of a Government which is attacked by a Power which is itself aggressive.

Beard's evidence is of three kinds. In part, it is built on the speeches, press conferences, and the like, of President Roosevelt from 1940 to the entrance of the United States into the war. In part, it is built on the actions of the President in the European theatre of war, which Beard regards as constituting a moral commitment to support the democracies against Hitler by actual intervention, Pearl Harbour or no Pearl Harbour. In part, it is built on a minute analysis of the joint Congressional investigation of Pearl Harbour, and all the diplomatic discussions which preceded it. From an immense volume of material, and with the most scrupulous documentation, Beard comes to two important conclusions. The first is, as I have said, that President Roosevelt wilfully deceived the people by promising to implement a policy of peace when he had already decided to embark upon war. The second is that the extent of executive authority now concentrated in the President's hands in all matters touching international relations has now reached a pitch where it contradicts the whole purpose of the American constitution. The "limitless authority that the President of the United States now possesses," Beard concludes, "publicly to misrepresent and secretly to control foreign policy, foreign affairs, and the war power" makes him a Caesar who holds the Republic in the hollow of his hand. Surveying the aftermath of the defeat of Germany and Japan, Beard concludes that Roosevelt's policy was not only an indefensible ideal, but also that it has left a situation far worse than it would have been if the United States had stood firmly by the policy of non-intervention.

These, plainly, are three quite separate questions which must be separately answered. The answer to the first charge is, I think, a clear one. Roosevelt warned the American people of the Fascist danger, both from the East and from Europe in the famous "Quarantine" speech of 1937. He made his attitude perfectly plain in his proclamation of American neutrality on the outbreak of war in September, 1939. He made it plain in his attack on Watson, Lindbergh, and the other America-Firsters from the moment that they showed their hand. He made it plain again in every effort to secure the repeal of the Neutrality Acts, and in the aid openly given to democratic Europe, and, later, to Soviet Russia, and in his constant insistence that their victory would be an American victory, their defeat an American defeat. Beard's reply to all this amounts to saying that at no time before Pearl Harbour, and especially not during the Presidential election of 1940, did Franklin Roosevelt openly tell the American people that he would intervene rather than see Hitler win, and that he concealed from them his intention to manœuvre Japan into a position where, by making them strike the first blow, he could fight by denouncing the Japanese Government as a body of dishonourable aggressors.

Frankly, for all the minuteness of his research, and with a very deep and affectionate respect for Beard, I do not think he has made out his case under the first head. I speak from first-hand knowledge when I say that, up to the fall of France, Roosevelt did in fact expect to maintain American neutrality. After it, he retained a diminishing hope of doing so; and in the campaign of 1940 he had to maintain the painful role of making a pledge to which every reasonable American knew that a *rebus sic startibus* clause was necessarily attached. I have read with care the Congressional investigation of Pearl Harbour and the negotiations which preceded it. Beard's quotations here are wholly unrepresentative; they are selected with a view to the indictment he wishes to drive home. He takes no serious account of the long and persistent effort of Japan to turn the Far East into a colonial sphere of exploitation, its decision to stake everything on the throws of the dice at Pearl Harbour, the attempt of the Japanese representatives at Washington to throw dust in American eyes while their planes completed this work of destruction. On every aspect, this is to say, of the so-called betrayal, he had completed his conclusions before he began to write, and this volume consists of a great mass of quotations intended to injure Roosevelt, but so selected as to boomerang violently upon the man who chose them. Neither the placid Nomura, nor the bellicose Tojo wanted peace with America. They wanted to make it impotent to resist their search for domination in the whole Pacific world.

In considerable degree I accept the second of Beard's arguments. Foreign policy is in the hands of the President (at least if he has a majority in both Houses of Congress) to a degree that until the time of Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson the Founding Fathers would have viewed with dismay and scepticism. But the answer to Beard's point is not that the old pre-Theodore Roosevelt methods can be made to work. The answer is, as no one knew better than Charles Beard himself, that the United States is trying to meet the twentieth century and its problems with devices still largely eighteenth century in character, so much so that almost all the charges he brings against Roosevelt could have been brought against James Polk and Franklin Pierce nearly a century ago. Beard's job was not to set an antiquated Constitution against Roosevelt's action, but to show what changes in it he would have made in order to prevent the excessive power of the President. This he wholly fails to do.

His third point is, possibly, more controversial. But I find it difficult to see the adequacy of the evidence which convinced him that a total victory of the Axis Powers would have given America more hope than the present situation affords her. On the contrary, I think it would have left America face to face with two ruthless states, unwilling to accept compromise, able to organise the material and manpower of most of the world against the United States, mobilised to strike quickly against it, and leaving America unable to arouse hope and enthusiasm among peoples who had been beaten and tortured into submission to Berlin and Tokyo. The dangers of the present situation are very great; I think they are far less than those in defence of which Charles Beard wrote his book.

Why did he write it? The answer is, I think, a personal one. He was an ardent supporter of Woodrow Wilson's entrance into the first World War; after Versailles, he was an unhappy and disillusioned man, who could not face the experience of disillusion and unhappiness a second time. This volume, and its predecessor, are a vast attempt to safeguard himself against the rise of those same emotions which made him enthusiastic in 1917. He was too old, in 1940-1, to face once more those icy winds of death which would send his beloved students and friends to ugly deaths on the Bataan Peninsula or in the Battle of the Bulge. He would not be taken in a second time. So he unstrapped the burden from his own shoulders and laid it on those of Franklin Roosevelt with all the damaging evidence, good or bad, that he could collect from anywhere. Charles Beard was so fine and noble a fellow that those who loved him most will find most pitiable the choice that he made. He was for the free world, and he wrote against it. He was for the great President, and he slandered him with angry malice. He hated the breed of Hitler and Mussolini and Tojo, and the ugly things they spawned, yet, objectively, he defended them. I prefer to think of the earlier Beard who helped to reshape American historiography and was one of its finest expressions. Few of us who knew that early Beard will be prevented from remembering him with devotion despite the intellectual misadventure of which this book is such pathetic evidence.

HAROLD J. LASKI

GIDE'S JOURNAL

The Journals of André Gide. Vol. II, 1914-1927. Translated from the French and annotated by JUSTIN O'BRIEN. *Secker & Warburg.* 30*s.*

A point which Gide makes again and again during these years of his middle life is that the people who liked his last book never like the one which has just appeared and, contrariwise, that his new admirers had never liked his previous work. He draws from this conclusions perhaps justly flattering to his own integrity, but it is also evidence of the extent to which Gide "plays" his audience. Never does he forget the reader. He has hardly begun a new book before he is calculating its probable effect and public reaction to it. This is at once Gide's weakness and his strength. In his time, many less gifted men have written books more sufficient. Gide holds us spell-bound not by particular demonstrations of creative power but by his persistence, his unremitting intelligence, the continuity of his mind. For this reason, one becomes more and more certain that it is his Journals which will live, that his other books are excrescences, interludes in a giant labour of autobiography, in which, however, they are later seen to take their place.

This second volume contains fewer moments of surprise than the first. Here is the familiar Gide of *The Counterfeiters* and the overt plea for homosexual initiation of the young (or rather of young men, for what is to happen to young women is not made clear). The Gide who briefly adhered to the cause of Russian Communism is yet to come, but he was prepared during these years by his visit to the Congo and his report on the exploitation of native labour. The beginning of the 1914 war is comprehensively presented. We see Gide behaving like a conscientious middle-aged member of the upper classes, looking after the poor at Cuverville, running the Foyer Franco-Belge in Paris, worried about the possibility of riots among the lower orders, investigating atrocities, complaining of the Swiss newspapers and then gradually losing interest, so that the end of the war is not recorded at all. There is dogged piano-practice in a limited repertoire, in which Albéniz figures with an odd prominence, and there is more self-examination about Christian doctrine than one might have guessed (the tract *Numquid et Tu* is printed in full). The amount of sheer hard work, the ill-health and anxiety recorded, are oppressive. And then there is a sudden clearing towards the end. 1927 was evidently a temperamental *annus mirabilis* for Gide, and, if Professor O'Brien has broken off at this point with dramatic intention and not merely divided his material into three parts, it was very clever of him. In the first volume, Professor O'Brien had some curious English sentences and some awkward footnotes. This time, the only irritations are stock Americanisms like "right now" and "let up" and "it's a rave," and the startling accusation that Anatole France's *Garden of Epicurus* is a novel. One begins to see with pleasure these three large, handsome volumes sitting side by side upon one's shelves and to feel sorry for the poor French, with their one-volume edition in the Pléiades series, which so easily warp.

By way of quotation, I lift from the last year's edition this piece of prophecy:

> Met on the boulevard Drieu la Rochelle. Since he announces to me that he is going to get married in five days, I consider it proper to invite him into a bar for a glass of port.
>
> "Yes," he tells me; "it is an experiment I want to make. I want to know whether or not I shall keep at it. Up to now I have never been able to maintain a friendship or a love-affair more than six months."
>
> All these young men are frightfully concerned with themselves. They never know how to get away from themselves. Barrès was their very bad master; his teaching leads to despair, to boredom. It is to get away from this that many among them hurl themselves headlong into Catholicism, as *he* threw himself into politics. All this will be very severely judged twenty years from now.

Barrès was of course always Gide's chief ideological enemy. Throughout the Journals and elsewhere in his critical writings he opposes his every attitude to one taken up by the Lorrain nationalist. Other younger men appear in these pages and are eagerly evaluated, Montherland, for instance, and notably Marcel Jouhandeau, perhaps the most interesting of living French writers of whom, so far as I know, not a line exists in English translation.

RAYNER HEPPENSTALL

NEW NOVELS

The Train. By VERA PANOVA. *Putnam.* 9*s.* 6*d.*

The Equilibriad. By WILLIAM SANSOM. *Hogarth.* 21*s.*

There were Three Men. By HELEN BEAUCLERK. *Gollancz.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

Brave and Cruel. By DENTON WELCH. *Hamish Hamilton.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

Readers of Miss Panova's book, *The Train*, will hardly be surprised to hear that with it she won the Stalin 100,000 rouble Prize. A remarkable first novel. You have not read half a page before you realise that you are in the grip of a masterly and masterful craftsman, who knows exactly, to a hair's breadth, where she want to put you, and who can, and does, put you right there on the dot every time. And no mooning! You get your nose right in it, on it, all the way. Exactly where is your nose? That's easy. There is no possibility of making a mistake in your location. In a Russian hospital train.

Miss Panova's canvas has a Russian largeness, and she carries on, too, the old Russian classical tradition of writing with a cold objectiveness. Amongst the characters—no favouritism! Each man merely has the virtues of his defects, and vice versa. But what pleases, particularly, is the never-forgotten contrast between the hopes of the individual and the totally unexpected impact of circumstance upon him. It is in this, perhaps, that Miss Panova most shows her quality, in her awareness of the larger network of forces which is proceeding relentlessly overhead so to speak, built upon a different scale, and for a different dimension, moving in a different direction, and which cuts into the individual's desires at every turn. Were it not for that artist's delicate awareness, one would classify the book as merely a magnificent Super-duper "documentary." And what does one mean by "merely documentary?" That is a hard question. But a vital one. Perhaps it is that everything experienced in a documentary seems to occur only in that curious place—the Present Moment. In that one moment of impact with the physical world before our deeper individual reverberations have had time to colour the experience with nostalgias and memories, with a sense of significance; that moment which at the first blush seems to be so "real," but during which we actually can see so much less than in the later, distorted moments of memory and contemplation. I believe you can recognise an artist by his brand of distortion. The old Russian writers were only, of course, pretending to be cold, impartial and indifferent. Miss Panova's work reads perhaps too much like the genuine thing. Her interesting *tour de force* is achieved with a sterilised surgeon's scalpel, and it is our cerebellum that has received her doctoring. We discover, when we come to, that our guts remain coiled in their private darkness below, only officially, as it were, advised upon the matter.

The Equilibriad is the title of the latest marionette show given by that master puppet impresario of the green, flickering fingers—Mr. William Sansom. This work, a long short story in a beautiful edition de luxe, with illustrations by Lucien Freud, is the perfect reverse of *The Train.* First, from a canvas crowded with figures we come down to only two, a Man and a Woman. Then again, in this work the surface realism, the present, that is the passing, moment, does not exist at all; there is only a delving and a skirmishing among Principles and Passions, some poetical, metaphysical distillations, and a rendering down of relationships. But don't misunderstand! It certainly *appears* to be a beautifully straightforward story about an ordinary young man getting up in the morning, and going off to work—at any rate just at first. Paul is a clerk, and Ada is the cousin with whom he has slipped into a boring, animal sort of "affaire," and she has lately lost her property in the country and all her money. At first Paul had been taken in by appearances—had looked on his cousin as humble, passive and dim. But one day he woke up and found he had acquired cosmic vision, and a gait to match, and he saw Ada translated! But words fail me to describe this young man's cosmic day, especially that part of it which took place in the gas-lit buffet in the tube station, where the final Grand Guignol act is laid. But words don't fail Mr. Sansom, and this is one of the cleverest and most interesting stories he has yet written. It is about the basic differences between Man and Woman and about their relationship to each other. Yet that statement conveys nothing at all of the wild and ghoulish vitality of the world that Sansom presents the reader with. *The Equilibriad* must assuredly not be missed by admirers of this intelligent poetical writer. (. . . *Tout de même* . . .! Mr. Sansom's idea, if it *is* his idea, of the female of the species, is devilish. Devilish. How dare he?)

With *There Were Three Men*, by Helen Beauclerk, back again to Realism. Not to say Realismus. And once more a crowded canvas. Here we have London bus rides, doctors' consulting rooms with all the illustrated papers spread out on the table, studio parties with their conversations in full, lodging houses and the lives therein, and rich mansions at Regent's Park with their musical parties. Not the book for admirers of Sansom we predict. And not for those whose pleasure derives from the technical joys of literature. Not for those people, that is to say, who are, as Elizabeth Bowen puts it in her notes on the craft of writing, "Always bearing in mind 'I will a tale unfold,'", and who can't help taking an interest in the maintenance of tautness, in variations of pace, and mood, and all the rest of it. This novel is rather for those who crave to lose themselves in a fictional world for the sake of the human element and for the sake of the vague buzz of the dinner and concert parties, for all the busy traffic of the novelist's streets; persons who are prepared to plunge in and submerge themselves in the multitudinous doings of the big Harley Street Doctor, of the titled Philanthropist, and the warped Intellectual, without wanting sometimes to come up for air by means of paragraphs on the overcrowded pages, without feeling disheartened when they find that six words are invariably used where one would have given the meaning. Such a very great deal happens in this book which starts in 1911 and finishes more or less up to date! And all of it intelligible, adult, sophisticated and ordinary.

Extremely sad is the news that came to us last week of Denton Welch's death. He was a most enjoyable, a most talented and promising young author, and still only in his twenties. It is a loss.

This, his last book, a collection of stories, is full of delightful things. The story which bears the title "Brave and Cruel" is perhaps my favourite. It is entrancing in, as you might say, a Betjeman way. It deals with a group of gentlefolk, neighbours in the country, who are hoodwinked by a young crook who poses as a wounded airman. This young crook is certainly the most enjoyably comical and embarrassing, yet pathetic, and convincing being.

"The Trout Stream," also, is a delicious tale. An Anglo-Indian suicide tragedy this, again Edwardian rococo. "The Judas Tree," too, is excellent. This is an eerie study of a pathological case, an expelled schoolmaster. Some of the tales included are almost too lightweight for words it is true. Slices of life, if they are short and slight enough, can be a bore. But there is included in this book a story, "Leaves from a Young Person's Notebook," which is really first-class writing. It is the study of a young man in a seaside nursing home in a fit of despair. This young person's sense of the hostility of the sea and of the esplanade, and of the remoteness from him of the life around, is most strikingly conveyed. Seized with a blind desire to escape the nursing home, the young man takes French leave and walks to the nearest town, to a pub. There he gets drunk. After a little he goes and is sick in the lavatory. Then he cheers up slightly, and, taking out a pencil, starts to embellish some drawings he finds out there on the wall. He is feeling by this time happier, dimmer, and less real. But as soon as he begins the return journey along the cliffs, setting eyes upon the sea and the long esplanade again, his misery returns. Back again in the home he bursts into tears in the arms of one of the sisters—then suddenly realising what he is doing, he leaves her and goes and lies down quietly on his bed. That is all. But it is brilliant.

JULIA STRACHEY

MUSIC AND LIFE

Man, Mind and Music. By FRANK HOWES. *Secker & Warburg.* 12s. 6d.

Studies in Contemporary Music. By WILFRID MELLERS. *Dobson.* 10s. 6d.

Erik Satie. By ROLLO MYERS. *Dobson.* 8s. 6d.

In his new book Mr. Howes conducts a series of spirited forays across the boundaries of music into the neighbouring territories of anthropology, philosophy, psychology and sociology. As is well known, these territories are inhabited by hostile tribes, jealous of their independence and commanded by chieftains of alarming pugnacity; and perhaps for this reason, Mr. Howes has felt obliged to make his incursions all too brief. *Man, Mind and Music* is full of interesting speculation about the mysteries of aesthetic and aural experience, and the author himself regards it as being "in some sense my musical *credo*"; like other creeds, it is rather a stimulating introduction to several enormous topics than a thorough investigation of any one of them, but it does reveal a consistent attitude of mind. Mr. Howes believes music to be "one of the Humaner Letters," and its connections with the rest of life to be closer than austere scientists, philosophers and musicians are inclined to allow. Sensible and congenial as I myself find this approach, I fear that professional philosophers and scientists will complain that the author ought to have begun by defining his terms and indicating his own philosophical position. Psychology being the most immature of the sciences, his psychological chapter is probably the least vulnerable, as it is the most interesting section of the book. An investigation of the process of artistic creation leads to a conclusion which strikes me as both ingenious and probable; in the present state of knowledge, one can hardly say more.

> The subconscious part of a man's mind is at once the store-house of his experience and the source of his mental energy . . . Now what does the mind, so equipped, do when it creates a new creation? It is not scientific to believe that anything can be created out of nothing, however new or strange or independent of the past it seems. *Ex nihilo nihil fit.* My answer is that the mind, receiving a new stimulus from the outer world of experience, performs an act of comparison of this new material with the experience already stored in the subconscious. . . . An act of comparison takes place and causes to burst up into full consciousness a new intuition which represents the reaction of his whole personality to the new experience. One further factor is in-

Out Monday

The Complete Poems of Richard Aldington

The first definitive collection made by the poet. Including his two well-known long poems *A Dream in the Luxembourg* and *A Fool i' the Forest* as well as *Images, Images of War, Images of Desire, Exile, Words for Music, The Eaten Heart, Life Quest, The Crystal World* and a number of poems not included in any former English edition. 16s net

Junior Omnibus Volume 3

For boys and girls of 10 to 16. Over 250 illustrations in colour and black and white. Junior has something to suit all tastes—stories by famous authors, pictures, puzzles, competitions and articles on a wide variety of subjects, such as sport, stamps, music, ballet, circus, art, radio, sweet-making, animals and careers. 8s 6d net

Write for our special Junior leaflet.

WINGATE

NOW READY!

● ● ●

EVERYMAN'S
UNITED NATIONS

Prepared by the UN Department of Public Information. With an Introduction by Trygve Lie, Secretary General.

A new, factual, and authoritative guide to the United Nations, its purposes, principles, functions and powers. No other volume gives such a complete and up-to-date picture of the organisation, its specialised agencies, its machinery and its achievements to date. It is the basic reference book on the subject.

● ● ●

216 *pages, paper* 7/6, *boards* 10/6 *net*

MAYFLOWER PUBLISHING CO., LTD.,
17, FARRINGDON STREET, E.C.4

JUST PUBLISHED BY THE

PHAIDON
PRESS

THE DRAWINGS OF HOGARTH

BY A. P. OPPÉ

FIRST COMPLETE
EDITION

25/- NET

★

PHAIDON PRESS LTD.
1 Cromwell Place S.W.7

JUST PUBLISHED

KATHARINE
ANTHONY

THE LAMBS

A first class biography of Charles and Mary, with sidelights on their contemporaries. Illustrated 15s. 0d. net.

ALSO AVAILABLE

Kathleen Campbell

Beau Brummell

15s. 0d. net.

Laura L. Hinkley

The Brontës

15s. 0d. net.

HAMMOND
HAMMOND

volved in the case of a musical creation and that is the power of symbolising in sound the intuitions which the mind makes. Symbolising is one of the fundamental powers of the human mind, and consists of substituting one image for another, usually one of simpler form but richer content for one of vaguer form with poorer content.

Believing musical ideas to be transmuted images of personal experience, Mr. Howes naturally finds a close connection between a composer's character and creative work, and traces the connection acutely in the cases of Beethoven, Tchaikovsky, Mahler and Rachmaninoff; rather less so, I think, in the case of Mozart. His very interesting analysis of Busoni's cosmopolitan, distracted personality is marred by the statement that Busoni's music "has no individuality." Exactly the same criticism used to be made of Mahler by Mr. Howes's predecessor on *The Times*, Dr. Colles—quite wrongly, as we can all see now. To those who know Busoni's music intimately, its individual flavour is no less apparent than that of Mahler; so much so that it is quite meaningful to speak of certain traits in other men's music as "Busoni-ish."

A passage from Bertrand Russell, though it refers to intellectual argument, is borrowed by Mr. Howes to define the critic's proper state of mind: "In studying a philosopher the right attitude is neither reverence nor contempt but first a kind of hypothetical sympathy, until it is possible to know what it feels like to believe in his theories, and only then a revival of the critical attitude." It is in some such spirit that Mr. Mellers must have approached the very various personalities whose work he discusses. Apart from two or three essays of a general character, his new book falls into three categories: French (Satie, Roussel, Koechlin, the later work of Debussy and Fauré), Central European (Mahler, Wellesz, Kodály) and English (Holst, Rubbra, Rawsthorne, Bax). Himself a composer of some promise, Mr. Mellers seems to constitute an exception to the general rule that good composers make prejudiced critics; few writers feel equally enthusiastic about so many different types of composer, and fewer still can define their several qualities with such intimate perception. Mr. Mellers writes so persuasively that one is almost tempted to accept his high valuation of composers like Satie, Koechlin and Wellesz, who for one reason and another are seldom performed and not always even published. His views are often extreme (as when he describes Gounod's *Philémon et Baucis* as "exquisite and impeccable"); but he can put his finger with uncommon skill on the essence of a composer's style:

> Fauré transforms the emasculated academic idiom of his time (the idiom of Saint-Saëns) into an idiom of almost Bach-like potency by means of his virile sense of melodic line and his mastery of the bass. There is, literally, nothing in contemporary music that can be compared with the sheer force, the calm and ordered strength, of Fauré's later melodies. They may have "charm"—the quality ignorantly associated with all Fauré's work—they may be sensuous sometimes, tender or melancholy, but they combine, always, massiveness with their grace, and their latent energy is immense.

Admirably said! But I cannot agree with Mr. Mellers in his contention that the civilisation mirrored in Fauré's music is "ideal," in the sense that "it has no objective reality—such as Byrd's or Bach's or Mozart's civilization had—outside the music." Fauré lived from 1845 to 1924, a period of immense distinction in French literature, science, painting and scholarship—and indeed in music; a period in which the minor arts of life also, above all the arts of conversation and social intercourse, flourished with undiminished vigour. Fauré's supremely distinguished music evokes and reflects this world of elegance and good taste; he is not one of those artists, like Baudelaire and Verlaine, who were at war with their surroundings.

For a portrait of the solitary artist at odds with the society and civilisation of his time, we need look no further than to Erik Satie, to whose enigmatic character Mr. Mellers devotes one of the best of his essays and Mr. Rollo Myers an interesting and amusing monograph. Both writers insist on the lasting value of Satie's music, which is for the most part quite serious in intention despite the buffooneries with which it is tiresomely surrounded. His inward seriousness is unquestionable: late in life he realised his lack of solid musical training, and entered the Schola Cantorum, whence he emerged with a Diploma in Counterpoint signed by D'Indy and Roussel with the comment "très bien"; on another occasion Roussel remarked that he was "prodigieusement musicien." The freakish jokes were partly a mask of protective irony to hide his disappointments; unfortunately so little of his music is performed, even in France, that the mask has become more important than the face, and the prospective listener's attitude depends almost entirely on whether he has been previously amused or irritated by the elaborate joke-mythology. Such scraps of his music as we hear possess a distinct, if tenuous charm; what we need is the opportunity of making ourselves familiar with the work that all Satie's admirers regard as his masterpiece, the "drame symphonique" *Socrate.*

DESMOND SHAWE-TAYLOR

CHAUCER'S LONDON

Chaucer's World. Compiled by EDITH RICKERT. Edited by CLAIR C. OLSON and MARTIN M. CROW. *Oxford University Press.* 30*s.*

An orderly load from the quarries of Professor Edith Rickert's learning is now posthumously edited and published under the title of *Chaucer's World.* It consists of a series of extracts, with brief explanatory comment, from fourteenth-century documents. They have been taken from published and unpublished sources and arranged to illustrate the main phases of the lives of average men and women in that period. The book contains *trouvailles* for almost every reader, whether specialist or not, according to his kind of interest; details of food and drink, of the prices of common commodities; of tournaments, of street-brawls, of doctoring, travel, trade-dispute, religious life, schooling; indeed, of a majority of normal goings-on that reach from the centre to the penumbra of Chaucer's world. Excellent and unhackneyed illustrations from contemporary manuscripts, selected by Miss Margaret Rickert, are plentifully interspersed.

What emerges more than ever is the authentic character of Chaucer's vision. Even one who reads Chaucer for the first time and without historical instruction apprehends him as a poet of veridical detail, the writer who, above all others, can make the common fact shine true. This intuitive trust in his veracity is here abundantly fortified by the evidence Professor Rickert has assembled. Among so many kindling pieces of corroboration it is hard to select the brightest and most telling.

I light upon a few; in the extract given from the records the Scrope-Grosvenor case of 1386, in which Chaucer himself was one of the witnesses, it is deposed that Sir William Scrope had attended expeditions "beyond the Great Sea," wearing the disputed arms (Azure, a bend Or); another Scrope, so armed, had been seen at Satalia, at Alexandria, in Prussia, in Spain and Lithuania. All these were among the places visited on like adventures by Chaucer's Knight. He was a figure not of romance but of common fact, he had fought his way round the Grand Tour of the fourteenth century.

There is a contemporary account of how to arm a knight for tournament (from the feet upwards,

Comparative
Productivity
in British and
American
Industry
L. ROSTAS
Number XIII in the series of Occasional Papers published for the National Institute of Economic and Social Research, carrying further and presenting in detail international comparisons of productivity already prepared by Dr Rostas. 18*s. net*
CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

ETHICS
FOR
UNBELIEVERS
AMBER BLANCO WHITE
An examination of the problems of morals in the light of science and philosophy, addressed to those who reject revelation as the foundation of ethical systems. Amber Blanco White is a University Tutorial Lecturer in Moral Science at Morley College and the author of a number of works on social and ethical problems.
12s. 6d. net.
ROUTLEDGE & KEGAN PAUL

Everyman's
Library
Some Recent Volumes
THE AMBASSADORS
HENRY JAMES
No. 987. The most important novel of James's 'third period.' Introduction by FRANK SWINNERTON.
BYRON'S POEMS
Nos. 486–8. New edition, reset, edited by GUY POCOCK. 3 volumes.
LEAVES OF GRASS
WALT WHITMAN
No. 573. An entirely new edition, edited by DR. EMORY HOLLOWAY, and containing in 512 pages all Whitman's poems.
POEMS OF OUR TIME:
1900–42
No. 981. Edited by RICHARD CHURCH and M. M. BOZMAN. Nearly 400 poems representing the work of 130 poets, from the famous to the unknown.
4s. 6d. net per vol.
List of over 500 volumes available free on request from the Publishers
J. M. DENT & SONS LTD.
Letchworth, Herts

January 25th
Graham Greene
THE POWER
AND THE GLORY
Considered by many critics to be his finest novel. Now available in the Uniform Edition.
7s. 6d.
★
Anne Crone
BRIDIE STEEN
A remarkable first novel of Irish life with an introduction by Lord Dunsany. 10s. 6d.
HEINEMANN

Company Meeting

THE "SHELL" TRANSPORT AND TRADING COMPANY, LIMITED

EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETING HELD ON 18th JANUARY, 1949.

A meeting was called to consider the necessary resolution to increase the share capital of the Company from £53,000,000 to £63,000,000 by the creation of 10,000,000 Ordinary Shares of £1 each.

In the course of his speech the Chairman, Sir Frederick Godber, said that not more than 5,100,000 of the new shares would be required for the purpose of the offer and that there were no immediate plans for the issue of the balance. The circular to shareholders explained the purpose of the offer which had been made by the Anglo-Saxon Petroleum Co., Ltd., one of the main holding and operating companies of the Royal Dutch/Shell Group, to the minority shareholders of the Venezuelan Oil Concessions Ltd. and was to acquire their shares in exchange for shares of the "Shell" Transport and Trading Co., Ltd.

Referring to the full information given to Shareholders in 1947 concerning the Management's views on the post-war expansion and development of the Group, the Chairman outlined the progress achieved in meeting the Capital requirements of the Group which he described as the "industrial sinews" of progress. Some 60 per cent. of the £105,000,000 then estimated as the requirements for the programme up to the end of 1949 had been provided by the share issues successfully completed in 1947 and more recently a long-term loan of $250,000,000 had been consummated with private interests to carry on the Group's world-wide developments particularly in the Western Hemisphere. This loan had enabled the Group to fulfil a leading part within the framework of the European Recovery Programme which looked to great industrial organizations to assist in financing their dollar capital requirements whenever possible through commercial channels and it had received the blessing of the Governments concerned.

No less important than the provision of capital was operating "economy," for in its day-to-day problems and their solution lay the testing-ground of the Group's success. Great advantage to all would accrue by the proposed merger, including that of unifying and simplifying executive direction thus increasing efficiency and economy.

Referring to the circular to the Venezuelan Oil Concessions' shareholders about the Shell Company's operations and prospects, the Chairman added that the Group's earning power had already been considerably enhanced by the programme of development on which the capital was being utilised and preliminary figures of 1948 results showed a large increase compared with 1947. 1948 was indeed a good year for the Oil Industry and particularly for the Group.

The Chairman said that he was not attempting to forecast the Company's dividend policy which must take cognizance of the Government's policy, in this respect and have regard to the Group's requirements and the increase in the cost of replacements and modernisations.

In making estimates of the Group's 1948 results, the Management have been careful in its depreciation policy and in making full provision out of revenue for all exploration and research expenditure, in 1948 these last two items alone amounted to more than £10 millions.

The Chairman speaking for the Board expressed confidence as to the future. All the Group's products including chemicals were needed in ever increasing quantities and the steps the Group was taking would enable it to play its full part in meeting these demands. To this end, the Group would continue to follow a progressive policy of expansion in all phases of their great enterprise.

In recommending approval of the Resolution to increase the capital for the consummation of the proposed transaction he, as Chairman and as a shareholder, believed that all interests would be well served by its completion.

As regards the arrangements between the Shell Company and the Royal Dutch Company, he said the number of Shell shares necessary to give effect to the offer would be contributed as to 40 per cent. by Shell and as to 60 per cent. by the Royal Dutch, thus dividing proportionately the burden of the proposed acquisition having regard to their relative interests.

The question of a consolidated account covering the Group's principal operating companies was under active study and the Chairman hoped to be able to give information as to the results at the next Annual General Meeting.

The resolution was carried.

"First ye must set on sabbatons and tie them upon the shoes with small laces so that they will bend") accompanied by an admirable illustration, and an account of how the tournament is to be conducted, rich in details that echo the tournament in the *Knight's Tale* beween Palamon and Arcite. Almost more interesting are the many lists of prices and indications of price scattered through Professor Rickert's collection of documents. A pair of coral beads with an *Agnus Dei* is priced at twenty-three and fourpence, a simpler pair at six and eightpence. That of Chaucer's Prioress resembles the more expensive of the two. Many of the objects priced in the inventories here contained have no immediate reference to Chaucer's poetry but they help to form some estimate of the relative values of money then and now. A long shirt, twelve pence. Five wongers (pillows), two shillings. The price of lodgings "not less than sixpence a day." From these and innumerable other such indications in this book, my feeble arithmetic computes that to reach a modern equivalent one must multiply by at least thirty, and in some cases as much as fifty.

This would mean that Chaucer was for the most part pretty well-to-do, "a damned successful poet," as Rupert Brooke has it, though his financial success appears from the records to be due to his efficiency in what would now be called the civil service, but was then courtiership. At the height of his career he was earning something like fifteen hundred pounds (in our money, tax free) a year, which casts some light on his "Complaint to his Purse," and on him, too, in view of the several occasions when he obtained official protection against being sued for debt. Of course, there were bumps in his earnings, as when his Patron John of Gaunt was out of the country, but it looks as if he were accustomed to do himself well and more to resemble his own Franklin than his Clerk of Oxford.

Still, he loved books too, and confesses to having had three times as many as the twenty the Clerk had collected at the head of his bed. Professor Rickert prints an interesting list of books left in 1358 (some ten years too late for Chaucer to have used them) to the Almonry School of St. Pauls in the Vintry, which Chaucer, as a child, may have attended. The list includes the *Logic of Aristotle,* the *Distiches of Cato, Claudian's Prosperpine,* the inevitable *Ovid Metamorphoses, Statius, Juvenal,* and other authors ever on Chaucer's tongue. Many of the books in this bequest must have been welcome duplicates in the tattered school library.

In so much wealth it may be unfair to complain of want, and as *Chaucer's World* is a book admittedly eclectic, the product of the reading of one devoted scholar with whims and interests of her own, not an exhaustive collection or documentary encyclopædia, it may seem ungenerous to complain. Yet I could wish for something on a number of subjects not here mentioned, Alchemy, for instance; for something more on monks and monasteries than a paragraph of sumptuary rule and an extract from the *Mirour de l'omme;* something more of Pardoners and Summoners and their sermons; or of dream psychology in which Chaucer was so proficient. And I cannot but add that in a sense *Chaucer's World* is a misleading title, for Chaucer was a European, one who had been countless times in Northern Europe and twice to Italy; but this work gives us nothing of what he would have found there, for instance, when he met Bernabo Visconti. Something of Sir John Hawkwood would have been welcome. It really is a book mainly about Chaucer's London.

Chaucer did not live to finish and arrange the *Canterbury Tales,* and Professor Rickert, like him, died before her work was completed. Her death in 1938 was a loss to scholarship at large as well as to the many that knew and delighted in her personally. This book is her memorial and as I have suggested, there emerges from it much of her personal charm, to be discerned in the kinds of thing that stirred her curiosity and enriched her scholarship. In her rebuilding of Chaucer's world she and her collaborators have built in something of her own authority and taste.

Nevill Coghill

The Bishop and the Cobbler. By L. E. Jones
Secker & Warburg. 10s. 6d.

This is an agreeably written book on—one hesitates to assign it so distasteful a name—ethical progress. Mr. Jones believes in good but not, except somewhat equivocally, in God; in Christ, but not in the Church. His book, therefore, is a sustained attack on dogma belief and ritual and ceremony in practice. He rebukes the Churches for substituting what he calls "Churchianity" for Christianity, by which he means that they have overlaid the original message of Christ with unseemly Pauline accretions, and insist on the truth of many dogmas which the modern mind finds frankly incredible. He further criticises official Christianity for investing sex with the sense of sin, demands the removal of adultery from the list of grounds for divorce and denies virtue to virginity. How much better it would have been, he suggests, if the Almighty had made our reproductive organs as aesthetically pleasing as those of flowers.

He proceeds to suggest a revision of the existing Anglican service designed to win back the great and growing numbers of those who have turned away from the Churches. Good music, vigorous community singing of hymns and psalms would be followed by a Petition for the Day, one only, taken from the existing Prayers and Collects. This would form the theme of the Sermon, the Sermon to be rendered fruitful by a prolonged period of quiet meditation. The difficulty of providing good music and preaching in small country churches would be met by the establishment of an Anglican broadcasting station to transmit music and sermons to all churches that elected to make use of it.

Mr. Jones's positive creed includes an affirmation of the absolute values of truth, beauty and goodness which, however, he subordinates to the over-riding human end of happiness.

The most hopeful feature of human nature is, he holds, our capacity to respond to goodness, to pursue truth for its own sake and to enjoy creative activity. He believes that what we call morality is called into being by the existence of evil; hence, if evil were to disappear morality would go with it. Nevertheless, man's delight in his creative activity would remain; it may well be that this above all others is the characteristic which we share with the Creative Spirit which expresses itself in the universe.

This bald summary does little justice to the charm of the book. Mr. Jones writes modestly and clearly and though there is little here that is new—and criticism might be brought on the score that the author seems at times to be unaware of the number of those who have thought and written on much the same line—his book, while it will do nobody any harm, may well bring a sense of comfort and guidance to young minds anxiously searching for something to hold on to in the contemporary vacuum of belief.

Week-end Competitions

No. 988

Set by Naomi Lewis

The usual prizes are offered for an extract from a *Brief Life* by John Aubrey of any eminent Victorian or Edwardian. Limit 150 words. Entries by February 1st.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 985

Set by Richard Lister

> The usual prizes are offered for the prediction of six startling events that may be expected on the cultural front in 1949 to be delivered in twelve lines of rhyming verse on the model of Tennyson's *Locksley Hall.*

Report by Richard Lister

Falling well below that high standard of sportsmanship that one has come to expect in these columns, competitors picked for themselves old, inactive sitting birds and then proceeded to pepper them. Many feathers flew: a number of mild wounds were inflicted: but hardly any neat kills. No entry was

Company Meetings

NATIONAL PROVINCIAL BANK LIMITED

BURDEN OF GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE

The 116th Annual General Meeting of Nationa Provincial Bank Limited is to be held on 10th February, 1949, at 15, Bishopsgate, London, E.C.2.

In his statement to Shareholders, the Chairman, Captain E. C. Eric Smith, M.C., says: The liabilities on current and deposit accounts have never been so closely scrutinised as they are to-day. From a domestic point of view rising deposits may indicate a healthy expansion in a bank's activities. On the other hand, such a trend may mirror the effects of the policy of the Government. There has been a moderate increase in this item in our books and the current, deposit and other accounts on 31st December amounted to £768,660,861. Cash, Money at Short Notice and Bills Discounted total £263,898,346, which gives a ratio to deposit liabilities of 34.3 per cent., a very satisfactory liquid position.

The net profit for the year is £1,383,387 against £1,347,929 for 1947. The payment of an interim dividend of 7½ per cent. and a final dividend at the same rate will require £782,052 and the following appropriations are recommended: to Contingencies Account £200,000 and to Reserve Fund £500,000.

GENERAL BUSINESS TONE.

The general tone of business has been satisfactory. In many trades, however, there is evidence of increasing stocks and a sense of selectivity, as regards price and quality, which did not exist before. So long as this tendency does not go too far it is no bad thing.

The export position is not unsatisfactory, and it is time that some tribute was paid to those who are working continuously to maintain existing and to expand new markets. Expansion must continue but achievement merits recognition. While we rely on the export trades to earn foreign currency, it is to such industries as agriculture and ship-building that we turn for its conservation. Here again, performance has been outstandingly good, notwithstanding the vagaries of the weather and the caprices of steel allocation.

The trade balance presents a less unwieldy appearance, but it is difficult to be optimistic . . . Those with the maximum amount of information profess to see the elimination of the overall adverse balance by the end of Marshall Aid. It is to be hoped that they are correct, but, whilst it would be unwise to question these conclusions, it would be equally stupid to bury our heads too deeply in the sand.

A considerable attack on inflation was launched early in the year but, although its early phases looked promising, it has not fared too well since. One of our principal tribulations is the enormous volume of Government expenditure; there appears to be no effort either to recognise it or to restrict it. A deflationary right hand remains in ignorance of, or ignores, the activites of an inflationary left hand.

NATIONALISATION.

The nationalisation of industry has proceeded steadily, but it is clear that the technique of running nationalised industry has still to be learned. Every such industry that drops out of the true profit-earning category not only imposes an additional burden on those industries which remain within it, but also entails a loss of revenue which must be made good from other sources. The country could not survive as a solvent entity with its major industries run on the Coal Board pattern and functioning as pensioners. It is curious that the ntaionalisation-minded should seek to extend their activities by the addition of the iron and steel industry to a collection already unwieldy, and one can only conclude that a limited number of men of intelligence have surrendered to the ideologies of a number of men of limited intelligence.

To what other industries it is intended to extend the benefits of state ownership we shall no doubt learn in due course. *L'appetit vient en mangeant.* It is sustained by the hunger for certain political objectives and by the hunger for planning. The country is assuming the shape of a business with an overhead which its turnover cannot support. Its head is becoming unduly swollen at the expense of its hands.

During the past three years the birth-rate of committees, councils, working parties and kindred bodies has surpassed all previous records. Their propagation is one of our most thriving industries and salvation largely depends, apparently, on the results of their deliberations. It is probable that the country would benefit were this time and energy directed to running its industry instead of talking about it.

DISTRICT BANK LIMITED

The Chairman, Sir THOMAS D. BARLOW, G.B.E., has circulated, with the report and accounts, his statement to the shareholders of District Bank Ltd., prior to the 119th annual general meeting to be held on 11th February at the Head Office, Spring Gardens, Manchester. In the course of his statement the Chairman said:—

Our Report and annual Statement of Accounts have been drawn up to conform to the requirements of the Companies Act, 1948. Apart from minor changes, you will see that the Reserve has been divided so that we now show a Capital Reserve Share Premium Account of £976,428 and a Revenue Reserve of £2,223,572 arrived at after making a transfer from the amount available for disposal.

During the past year, deposits have increased by over £13 millions. Reflecting the general trend of banking figures, this upward movement seems to indicate that the country is not showing that measure of deflation which, since 1947, has been accepted as the necessary initial step to recovery. If twelve months ago it was widely acknowledged that there was too much money, it is obvious that there is too much now.

Arising out of our larger resources there have been changes in the distribution of our assets. Apart from necessitating an increase in cash, the additional deposits must be prudently employed by adding to the next lines of defence. Thus Money at Call and Short Notice and Bills of Exchange, consisting mainly of Treasury Bills, are increased by over £1,600,000. There is also an addition of £5 millions to Treasury Deposit Receipts which more than offsets a fall in our Investments. We may add that these continue to be mainly repayable at fixed dates and appear in the Balance Sheet at well below their market value.

Our Advances to Customers have now reached £44,778,000 and it is satisfactory that our total lendings, including the increase of nearly £7 millions during the year, are well spread over a wide range of essential industries including agriculture.

Some small purchases made during the year account for the increase in Bank Property. Since, however, our properties are already shown in the Balance Sheet at a very conservative value we do not feel that further provision for depreciation is necessary this year.

Net Profit for the year amounts to £525,432, an increase of £21,636 compared with the figure for 1947. We think this result may be regarded as satisfactory, bearing in mind it has been achieved despite high taxation and the inevitable increase in expenses. Previously provisions for bad and doubtful debts and contingencies have been made out of the current year's profits. It is now considered desirable to conform to the general banking practice. This year, therefore, Net Profit has been arrived at after paying all expenses, providing for taxation and after making a transfer to Reserve for Contingencies out of which full provision for bad and doubtful debts and other contingencies has been made.

With the amount brought forward from the previous year we have a disposable balance of £899,656. As indicated in the Report we have allocated £200,000 to Revenue Reserve: we deem it desirable to augment our published reserves as and when it is possible to do so because of the increase in our obligations. We have also applied £120,000, the same amount as last year, to Pensions and Annuities Fund. After these deductions and allowing for dividend payments at the same rate as formerly, there remains a sum of £294,016 to carry into the accounts for 1949.

Our customers are taking full advantage of our Export Information Service which was designed to give practical advice on financial and technical problems concerning overseas trade.

There has been a steady expansion of every class of Trustee business during the year.

As the policy of nationalisation develops, the reinvestment of Trust Funds becomes more complicated and I would urge the need for a revision of the Investment clause in the existing Trustee Act.

FURTHER EDUCATION

Single copies are in short supply, but yearly postal subscriptions can still be accepted for this vigorous and stimulating quarterly.

£1 post free to any address.

10 Great Turnstile, London, W.C.1

BARCLAYS BANK

THE TAXATION BURDEN

The fifty-fourth ordinary general meeting of Barclays Bank Limited will be held at the head office, 54, Lombard Street, London, E.C., on February 10th.

The following is an extract from the statement by the chairman, Sir William Goodenough, Bt., circulated with the report and accounts for the year 1948:—

The net profit for the year amounted to £1,879,943 compared with a figure of £1,637,706 for the year 1947. The total assets of the Group are shown to be £1,864,887,762, while current, deposit and other accounts amount to £1,748,275,142. Amongst the assets, the liquid items, namely, cash in hand and with the Bank of England and Central Banks Abroad, and Gold Bullion; Balances with other Banks and Cheques in course of Collection; Money at Call and Short Notice; Bills Discounted, and Treasury Deposit Receipts, amount to £928,048,654, which represents a ratio of 53 per cent. to Deposits. The Group's Investments, apart from those classified as Fixed Assets, are £443,578,109, and Advances to Customers and other Accounts stand at £402,449,657.

NEGLECT OF FIRST PRINCIPLES.

The plight into which this country has fallen is attributable mainly to circumstances beyond our control, but it has been aggravated by a tendency to set aside first principles, and the process of recovery could be very greatly hampered by continued failure to pay them proper respect. A refreshing sense of realism that has begun to permeate the atmosphere in the past year shows that lessons are being learnt, but the body economic, like the human body, must have its tissues constantly renewed, and this implies a continuing stream of fresh resources in adequate volume moving into productive investment. The point I wish to emphasise concerns the increase in the scale of our industrial needs in this respect in relation to the amount of the national income, not merely in the next few years but, so far as one can see, for all time in the future.

We could have no more impressive evidence of the consequences of an insufficiency of new capital goods than has been given by the condition of our economy in the post-war years. About a quarter of the whole of our national wealth was lost in the war period. The enormous task of making good the deficiencies left by the war has been aggravated by the great increase in prices. It has become increasingly evident that money set aside out of past earnings to meet depreciation and development has been rendered inadequate by the subsequent sharp rise in replacement costs.

UPWARD TREND OF PRICES.

The rise in prices is a short-term distortion due to war-engendered scarcity and monetary inflation and we may reasonably hope for some eventual adjustment as the condition of scarcity is overcome. But the long-term trend of prices, too, has to be thought of in relation to the wider aspect of the problem of capitalisation. Bearing in mind that managed currencies, coupled with the principle of "full employment," have displaced the automatic checks and balances of the nineteenth century gold standard, and remembering that a large element in costs of production everywhere is extremely rigid, it would be unwise to think on any other assumption than that the long-term trend of prices will continue to be upward.

Our aim must be, at the earliest moment, to devote to industrial development a larger proportion of our national income than in years gone by, if need be, at the expense of other forms of new capital outlay, however desirable in themselves. By inference, the brakes upon enterprise, both personal and corporate, must be released.

These conclusions throw into yet greater prominence the urgency of bringing about a reduction in the appalling rate of Government expenditure, partly because of its diversion of national resources, but mainly because of the stultifying effect upon work and enterprise, throughout the whole range of personal endeavour, of the present level of taxation. The real need is for the main burden of taxation to be lightened. The indications are that the level of taxation required to meet the present rate of day-to-day Government expenditure not only inhibits the building up of our desperately needed capital resources, stultifies the essential accumulation of savings, and enfeebles the spirit of enterprise, but represents a proportion of the national income greater than can be borne indefinitely.